

“ COURTESY ” IN SHAKESPEARE



“COURTESY” IN SHAKESPEARE

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WITH A FOREWORD BY

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AND

AN INTRODUCTION BY

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The Sorbonne, Paris



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1130

PUBLISHED BY THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

1940



BCU 626

PRINTED IN INDIA

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY BHUPENDRALAL BANERJEE
AT THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY PRESS, SENATE HOUSE, CALCUTTA.

Reg. No. 1174B—March, 1940—E

120460

To
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D.LITT., BARRISTER-AT-LAW, M.L.A.,
PRESIDENT, COUNCIL OF POST-GRADUATE
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PREFACE

The present volume embodies part of the work done by me as a Ghose Travelling Fellow of the University of Calcutta for the year 1936. The literary investigation was carried on mostly in the British Museum and in the Library of the University College, London. Something was also done in the Libraries of the Universities of Paris and Rome. My visit to Italy was prompted by a desire to see the traces of the Renaissance which is closely connected with the subject of my study, and contact with the University of Rome facilitated its realisation.

The topic dealt with in the following pages had been suggested by my previous study of Spenser whose poetry also reveals the influence of the Renaissance ideals of conduct and culture. What is evident and palpable in Spenser, is vague and elusive in Shakespeare. The difficulty inherent in the tracing of influences in great writers increases considerably in the case of Shakespeare. Though Shakespearean criticism is almost endless in variety and extent, the influence of courtesy in his work does not appear to have been investigated.

In studying this difficult and amorphous subject I have received encouragement and sympathy from many distinguished scholars to whom I take this opportunity of acknowledging my obligation.

Prof. C. J. Sisson of the University of London, Prof. Louis Cazamian of the Sorbonne, Dr. F. S. Boas, Mr. B. E. C. Davis of Westfield College, London, and Prof. Mario Praz of the University of Rome deserve my sincere thanks. I frequently consulted Prof. Sisson and Mr. Davis who took a keen interest in my work and helped me with valuable advice and important suggestions. To Prof. Sisson and Prof. Cazamian I am further indebted for the "Foreword" and the "Introduction" respectively to this volume.

I have also to thank the Rev. C. S. Milford, Mr. N. M. Chatterjee and Mr. T. N. Sen, my colleagues in the Post-Graduate Department of the University of Calcutta, and Mr. T. P. Mukherjee of Presidency College, who were kind enough to read the proofs.

I should further express my obligation to Mr. J. C. Chakravorti, the Registrar of the University of Calcutta for expediting the publication of this volume, and to the Superintendent and the staff of the University Press for giving me every help I needed and accommodating me in all possible ways.

Though this book was almost fully written out in England, I had no time there to verify satisfactorily the references and the quotations. In Calcutta I had not the requisite library facilities for the work. Hence errors may have crept in, though I had tried my best to avoid them. I can

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only crave the indulgence of readers in this matter, and shall feel grateful if mistakes in footnotes and other references are brought to my notice.

CALCUTTA ;
February, 1940

M. M. BHATTACHERJE

FOREWORD

Dr. Bhattacharje has paid me the compliment of inviting me to write a Foreword to his interesting and valuable book. I do not know that my observations, in my personal capacity as a fellow-scholar, can carry much weight. But in three of my other functions I have some interest in the matter and some right to herald Dr. Bhattacharje's appearance in these pages.

It was my privilege once to be a teacher in an Indian University, on that side of India which is geographically (though not necessarily in other ways) nearest to that Western civilisation, whose contact with Indian civilisation and thought has borne such remarkable fruit, reciprocally stimulating and beneficial. I saw then, with pleasure, the promising beginnings of serious and competent scholarship, in the modern sense, in Western literary studies, and the first steps taken by the great Indian Universities to encourage and build up Schools of Research, in an effort in which the University of Calcutta was no laggard. Fifteen years have passed since my own direct participation in this movement ended, but I have observed from afar, and always with deep interest, stimulated by kind communications from Indian scholars, the growth of a real Indian contribution to original work in English as in other fields, much of which

can be claimed by Eastern India. Dr. Bhattacharje's book is one more sign of the times.

Secondly, Dr. Bhattacharje's work was in part carried out in London, at my college—University College—where we discussed together the trend of his studies while they were taking shape. Few realise to-day how some of the noble spirits who were responsible for the foundation of Presidency College in Calcutta and of Elphinstone College in Bombay, had also a share in the foundation of University College in London. In its Library and its corridors may be seen the busts of Indian sympathisers—a striking and happy example of the reciprocal quality of the contact between two great peoples, thus commemorated.

Thirdly, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts in the University of London has necessarily a wide view of the total volume of scholarly traffic between the great metropolitan University and her Indian sister-Universities, and he may draw conclusions upon the general bent of the numerous friendly invaders from India. That trend is now more and more in the direction of pure scholarship instead of qualification for service, of intellectual instead of occupational advancement. The attractions of London are more and more being seen to be opportunity for study, a body of fellow-scholars, great libraries and facilities for work, and a welcome for honest scholarly purpose. Dr. Bhattacharje was led by such high

allurements towards the setting sun, and to attack a problem of difficulty.

The difficulty of his problem is indeed the attraction of his book. To its inherent difficulty is added that of focussing its implications upon the work of Shakespeare. He had the advantages of a thorough and loving familiarity with Shakespeare, a knowledge of Italian, and the determination that followed industriously wherever the intellectual nexus led him, often into distant and tangled countries of thought and knowledge. Not the least of the qualities of his work is the realisation that the Elizabethan age, and with it Shakespeare's outlook, was rooted in the Middle Ages, however blown upon by Renaissance winds and inoculated by new pollen thus wind-swept. Thus, through the study of mediaeval and Renaissance concepts of Courtesy, he has been able to examine afresh Shakespeare's plays and poems, and to direct a shaft of light upon their infinite variety, in a commentary to which the second half of his book is devoted. There will be few readers of his book who do not find his commentary, from this special point of view, helpful and illuminating. It is a happy augury for the future that Shakespeare, for over a century now a possession of India, should be so much a living force in Indian literary scholarship as in creative art and on the stage.

C. J. SISSON

INTRODUCTION

This is one of the occasions—they are not infrequent—when the writer of a preface feels that he knows much less about the question at issue than the author of the book which he is supposed officially to recommend. That Dr. Bhattacharje should have asked me to pen an Introduction to his study of “*Courtesy in Shakespeare*,” thus implying that I could stand as a sponsor to it with any authority, I regard as a kindness and a compliment to myself, the more undeserved as I have never put forth any claim to special competence in the field of Elizabethan studies. It is only on the strength of a general acquaintance with that fascinating period, that I venture to acknowledge the pleasure and profit which I have derived from this valuable piece of original research. Whether it was suggested by a pregnant remark of Sir Walter Raleigh in his Introduction to Hoby’s translation of Castiglione’s *Cortegiano*, or was conceived independently, I do not know ; but Dr. Bhattacharje’s previous work on “*Platonism in Spenser*” may well of itself have led him to another inquiry, which touches or indeed overlaps the former at several points. After a survey of the growth, first, of the chivalric ideal of courtesy, then of Renaissance courtesy, in England,

Shakespeare's plays and sonnets are examined in that light ; and upon a body of cumulative evidence the conclusion is founded that Italian codes of virtue and manners, and especially Castiglione's treatise, were directly or indirectly active in Shakespeare's mind as he wrote. The assertion is ably supported, with a sense of the difficulty that always lurks in establishing intellectual influences ; and it can hardly be denied that the impetus given by the Renaissance ideal of culture, transmitted to England through channels that were mainly Italian, was largely responsible for the flowering of types of behaviour and ideas of personal or social worth, which in the background of Shakespeare's plays appear as genuine forces, moulding characters and shaping their destinies. That Castiglione's book was far and away the most authoritative exponent of the Italian ideal of courtesy is beyond any doubt ; and so Dr. Bhattacharje's essential contention gathers practically irresistible weight. It is about the connection he discovers conjecturally between individual passages, features or incidents in Shakespeare's plays, and this or that aspect of courtesy as stressed by its teachers, especially by Castiglione, that one may express occasional doubt. While nothing is more certain than that such ideas were in the air, it is all but impossible, for that very reason, to lay one's finger on the source from which a particular stream of influence may have flowed. But Dr. Bhattacharje is fully aware of the fact,

and he hardly ever presses his points further than safety will allow. We are thus justified in regarding this work as a useful addition to our knowledge, and one more proof of the brilliant proficiency of the school of Indian critics in the domain of English Literature. There was perhaps a reason in the nature of things why this aspect of the historical investigation of Shakespeare should have appealed to an Indian scholar who had already made his mark, and whose early promise had been more than fulfilled : to seize the magnetism of " Courtesy " at work in Shakespeare's mind, just as to follow the spreading of Platonic ideas through the poetry of Spenser, did require a subtle perception and a power of apprehending elusive spiritual values ; on that plane of philosophical as well as literary criticism, Dr. Bhattacharje has shown himself particularly qualified and gifted ; and it is probably no illusion to infer that his gift may be, largely at least, part of his national and racial heritage.

LOUIS CAZAMIAN

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following works are referred to in abbreviated forms as indicated below :

Early English Text Society's Publications, Original Series	...	EETSOS
Early English Text Society's Publications, Extra Series	...	EETSES
<i>Modern Language Notes</i>	...	MLN
<i>Modern Language Review</i>	...	MLR
<i>Modern Philology</i>	...	MPhil
<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>	...	JEGPhil
<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i>	...	PMLA

“ Courtesy ” in Shakespeare

PRELIMINARY

Ideals of personal excellence and of conduct vary from age to age. They are the products of circumstances which change with the times, of civilisations and cultures which come and go. The Philosopher was looked upon as the acme of human perfection in ancient Greece, and the Orator in ancient Rome. The Knight was put on the same level with these in the Feudal age, while the Renaissance glorified the Courtier.¹ Though these types differ in many respects and though the Wisdom of the Greeks, the Virtue of the Romans, the Chivalry of the Feudal epoch and the Courtesy of the Renaissance appear as distinct ideals evolved in different

¹ Several other patterns of human perfection have also been noticed : “ . . . the churchmen of the Middle Ages described the *modest and dignified Christian*, and at the head of temporal affairs, the *Christian prince*, while secular writers of the same period portrayed the *courfois*, or man of the world . . . the French Revolution, in its earliest and noblest enthusiasm, produced the *citizen*. England still has the *gentleman*. In America, a few writers with a philosophic turn of mind have pictured a *business administrator* compact of moral excellencies, personal dignity, and an adequate degree of culture.” (J. E. Mason, *Gentlefolk in the Making*, p. 1.)



periods of European history, there are common features which show clear traces of borrowing.

For example, Italian writers on conduct during the Renaissance drew upon the philosophers of Rome as well as of Greece. The attraction for Italians of the glories of ancient Rome, as reflected in Humanism, had commenced before the fall of Constantinople and the revival of Greek culture in Western Europe. It was the product of a desire for the enjoyment of the rhythm, form and symmetry in the life, literature and art of ancient Rome, which had been snapped by the barbaric invasions, and had a patriotic as well as an aesthetic aim. Petrarch was probably the first Italian to feel it. The Roman ideal of education based on this sense of rhythm and form, as explained by Quintilian, Cicero and the Stoics, captivated the imagination of the leaders of Humanism.¹ Before 1470 Greek ideals contributed almost nothing to it. Cicero

¹ Of the early preachers of Humanism which is traceable to Petrarch, the best known were Guarino da Verona (1374-1460), Vittorino (1378-1446), Leo Battista Alberti (1404-72) and Palmieri (1406-75). The first two were teachers. Guarino came in touch with the celebrated Latin scholar Vergerius, and went to Constantinople to study Greek. Vittorino read Greek with him. Their schools at Mantua and Ferrara were conducted in accordance with the best principles of Humanism—the ideal of harmonious development of all the human faculties.

See W. H. Woodward. *Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance*, p. 8.

and Quintilian had defined the accomplishments of the orator and prescribed the requisite training for him. Seneca and Epictetus had taught self-control and benevolence. The Stoic Wise Man, almost identifiable with Cicero's and Quintilian's Orator—highly cultured and eloquent in speech—became the ideal of educationists in Italy inspired with Humanism. Intellectual culture, physical perfection and manners (*mores*) borrowed from the Romans thus came to be looked upon as the hall-mark of the courtier during the Renaissance. Some Greek influence filtered through Plutarch, though he wrote almost like a Roman, and through Cicero whose ideas bore the stamp of Aristotle.¹ The direct teachings of Greek thinkers like Plato and Xenophon came later—after the revived Greek studies had made some progress.

¹ The classical origins of later writings on social conduct and polity have been discussed in *Gentlefolk in the Making*, pp. 6-7.

Dr. Ustick observes, "Two main currents, unbroken through the ages are observable : the tradition of the Magnanimous Man as set forth by Aristotle ; and the Stoic tradition, known to later times specially through Epictetus and Seneca. . . . The Magnanimous Man, with Stoic ideas added, is, so far as character is concerned, what the sixteenth century conceived ideally as the aristocrat. The traits which add distinction are for the most part drawn from Aristotle ; the traits which insure heroism are largely from the Stoics." (*MPhil.* Vol. 30, p. 147.)

There are many features common to chivalric manners and the Renaissance norm of conduct, and the latter is also indebted to the former in a large measure. In fact, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish the two, and the chances of confusion are really great.¹

The word “courtesy” has been used with reference to both the codes of manners. These are partly set forth in courtesy books of the two epochs which deal with matter exceedingly varied, “covering the whole range of human activity, and extending from the correct way in which to eat dinner to the wisest and most just (or shrewdest and most successful) methods of ruling a kingdom.” Courtesy has thus come to be defined “as a code of ethics, aesthetics, or peculiar information for any class-conscious group. . . . As a practical body of writing on conduct, courtesy may be contrasted with metaphysical inquiries into the divine sanctions and ultimate ends of human action, on the one hand, and into questions of

¹ Doubts have been expressed by some as to the influence of Chivalry on the Renaissance ideal. In the last chapter of *Chivalry* (edited by Edgar Prestage) it is indirectly admitted to be one of the sources, though not the sole source, of the Renaissance code of manners. Three fifteenth-century treatises have been described as the link between the two, viz., the *Book of the Order of Chivalry*, the *Book of Good Manners* and the *Book of St. Albans*.

‘ higher ’ and ‘ lower ’ good on the other. Every social group tends to develop its own peculiar standards of behaviour. Such standards grow out of differences in race or nationality, rank, occupation, age, sex or peculiar interest. . . . Rules of courtesy . . . are the formulated standards by which the average individual of any given class acts.”¹

Courtesy books have been classified into (1) books of parental advice, (2) books of polite conduct, (3) books of policy and (4) books of civility. The first contain practical, rather than theoretical, summaries of conduct-rules, informal in tone and written by qualified elders for the instruction of the youth in whom they are interested. The second are more systematic, and tend to develop a logical theory of behaviour. Books of policy, which form the third class, are concerned with government and worldly success, and those of civility give practical instruction as to dress, conversation, table manners and recreation.

It has been said that the Elizabethan Age in England was eclectic, and that it borrowed indiscriminately from all quarters. Professor Hardin Craig sees in this the evidence of the “ deficient critical power ” of the Elizabethans, and thinks that their culture was built on “ a foundation of formalism of thought ” and “ inability to originate

¹ J. E. Mason, *Gentlefolk in the Making*, p. 4.



ideas." His conclusion is that this was at the root of their creative power.¹ He is of opinion that the ideal of conduct of Renaissance Italy appealed to the Elizabethan because "nature propelled him to activity," and he naturally tried to discover "what were the salutary and congenial patterns of action." For a similar reason, he borrowed "statecraft and pedagogy from the Greeks and the Romans, manners in peace and conduct in war from chivalry."

Shakespeare is known to have been indebted to Italian sources for some of his plots. It is unlikely that his obligation to Italy should have been limited to this extent only. Actually, it extended further, and he was undoubtedly attracted by the ideal of courtesy of the Renaissance as well as by its spirit of adventure and its intellectual curiosity. Again, he belonged to an age which immediately followed the Feudal epoch, and the influence of chivalric manners is also discernible in his plays. An attempt will be made in the following pages to trace in these some aspects of the ideal of courtesy as it was evolved during the Renaissance and in the preceding age.

A discussion of the question of influence is fraught with peculiar difficulties in the case of Shakespeare. While writers like Spenser reproduced almost exactly what they appropriated from

¹ See *The Enchanted Glass*.

others, Shakespeare's borrowings generally suffered a "sea-change into something rich and strange." What passes through the alembic of his imagination cannot be easily traced to its origin. Little hints and suggestions are worked up by him into things of imperishable beauty. Shakespeare does not deal with all his sources in the same way. His fidelity to the original is perceptibly greater in the case of a graphic story than in the case of a disquisition. The literature of courtesy being in the latter category, there is no means of proving Shakespeare's obligation to it in any conclusive manner. All that can be done is to suggest, from an examination of the relevant circumstances and the plays themselves, that it is highly probable.

CHAPTER I

CHIVALRIC IDEAL OF COURTESY

It is necessary to stress some of the special features of the Feudal epoch in order to make its culture and social code, as distinct from those of the Renaissance, appear in their true perspective. Feudalism was "a confederation of little sovereigns—of small despots."¹ Feudal chiefs were always liable to attack by rival lords, and incessant warfare was the consequence. The Feudal hierarchy meant a wide gulf between two classes, though military duties had to be done by both. The vassals or serfs had to fight on foot, and were distinguished from the nobility—the *cavaliers* or *chevaliers*. The chief had fiefs under him as well as his own domain which was divided into the lord's demesne and the holdings of peasants, both free *roturiers* and serfs, whose services were often commandeered by him. The serf suffered from heavy taxation, and had almost no rights. He was persecuted in many ways, for there was nothing like the organised police to give him protection against oppression and extortion. The economic centre was the lord's residence or castle. In abbeys the economic administration was under

¹ J. T. Abdy, *Feudalism*, p. 14.



the control of the Abbot. Provisions were stored in cellars and barns, and livestock in stables, as there was almost no means of communication between villages and towns, and but little trade, though some form of barter existed on account of the excess of production over consumption in villages. This economic isolation of the Feudal society was the cause of the extreme poverty of the people. They figure in this system only as serfs, foresters, huntsmen, swineherds, grooms, chamberlains, butlers, etc.¹ Their ignorance was proportionate to their poverty, and even the upper classes had hardly any education.

It is no wonder that in the Feudal age the poor, oppressed and ignorant masses were "rude" in speech and devoid of "manners" which were claimed by the castled aristocracy as their monopoly. Their evolution in the tyrannical feudal patriciate was, however, very slow. Chivalry has been called the moral code of the feudal knight, and is believed to have been "the spontaneous emergence into life and light of Germanic manners and feudal relations."² It is thus said to have "taken its rise in the interior of castles." This is only partially true, for its elaborate ceremonialism, its moral development, its fantastic language

¹ See P. Boissonnade, *Life and Work in Medieval Europe*, tr. E. Power.

² J. T. Abdy, *Feudalism*, p. 302.

and its peculiar devotion to women must be traced to the influence of Christianity.¹ The initiation into knighthood took place in the church where the priest officiated. After the ceremony blessings were showered on the youthful aspirant to honour, and thus a connection was established between Christianity and arms. Knighthood was called the Eighth Sacrament.² The object of the Church was to give a fresh direction to the ardent spirit of the feudal aristocracy and to enlist it in the service of humanity—the relief of the poor and the distressed. Formation of orders of chivalry, like the Templars and the Hospitallers, was one of the practical steps taken to promote it.

The virtues supposed to have been fostered by chivalry were “courage, good faith, courtesy, liberality, respect for women and piety.”³ Chrétien de Troyes in his *Cligès* refers to them as “largesce, hautesce, corteisie, savoirs, jantillesca, chevalrie, hardemanz, seignorie and biautez.” Sense of honour was another chivalric virtue. Treason was severely punished, as it meant the violation of the word of honour.

These knightly virtues were supposed to receive their full worth from the love of a lady. In one of its senses, *courtesy* itself in the chivalric code is

¹ *Chivalry*, ed. Prestage, p. 15.

² A. F. Villemain, *Littérature du Moyen-Age*.

³ F. W. Cornish, *Chivalry*.

man's relation—delicate and dignified according to one standard—with woman. It forms the subject-matter of Troubadour poetry as well as of the *Romances* and *Chansons de geste*. It is love, but of a type which reflects the thoughts of the chivalric age. Its chief characteristics, as summarised by a recent writer, are “humility, courtesy, adultery and religion of love. The lover is always abject. Obedience to his lady's slightest wish, however whimsical, and silent acquiescence in her rebukes, however unjust, are the only virtues he dares to claim. There is a service of love closely modelled on the service which a feudal vassal owes to his lord. . . . The whole attitude has been rightly described as a ‘feudalisation of love.’ This solemn amatory ritual is felt to be part and parcel of the courtly life. It is possible only to those who are, in the old sense of the word, polite. It thus becomes, from one point of view the flower, from another the seed, of all those noble usages which distinguish the gentle from the villain; only the *courteous* can love, but it is love that makes them *courteous*.”¹

It has been observed that passion was really sublimated by *courtesy* into something higher. Comparison is hence made of “the primitive savagery of the old epics with the increasing delicacy of sentiment and polite restraint represented in

¹ C. S. Lewis, *Allegory of Love*, p. 2.

the later romances.”¹ The ideal of courts, it is said, was *amour courtois* :

Oneur, amour, et vaisselage,
Secret deduit, plaisance et honnesté.

According to Gai Saber (*gaie science*, or the poetical works of Troubadours and *Trouvères*), a young squire must try to win his lady's love and admiration through his achievements on the battle-field and in the lists, *courtesy* and service. It has been suggested that adoration of women by the Troubadours (or *courtesy*) was the effect of Mariolatry.

Courtesy signified not only love, but many other virtues as well. It often meant kind behaviour towards the enemy. It has been suggested that the new relation of the knight with womankind made him more gentle towards the defeated or captured enemy. It was due to the virtue of courtesy (*courtoisie*) that prisoners of noble blood or of high rank were reprieved, the usual practice in mediæval times being to kill all prisoners without any distinction.² In *Cligès*, just to save the prisoners he had taken, the courteous Alexander arranged to send them to the Queen and not to the cruel King. Percival refrained from slaying a knight whom he had defeated and taken captive, because his initiator into chivalry had advised

¹ L. F. Mott, *The System of Courtly Love*, p. 105.

² H. O. Taylor, *The Mediæval Mind*.

him not to do it, if he valued courtesy. Self-restraint exercised by hot-tempered warriors in addressing each other was also called courtesy. It was the opposite of "slandorous speech" or "villainy" [O. Fr. *vile(i)nie*]. When Percival set out to seek his fortune, his mother asked him, in her parting message, to "speak fair and accost every worthy man." Hospitality to the enemy in times of truce was also included in courtesy. It was, again, this virtue which taught the knight to be kind and gentle to female prisoners of war who were usually reduced to slavery. The desire to win a battle with as little loss of life as possible was also the product of courtesy, and modern International Law recognises principles suggested by it.

Courtesy also meant the breeding received in royal courts or in noblemen's households by knights, squires and pages. They had all, irrespective of their position, to do personal service to their lords, even though there were domestic menials under them. Pages were mostly the sons of noblemen, and their training began when they were only seven years old and had just been removed from the care of nurses and governesses, and lasted till their fourteenth year.¹ Squires were entrusted with their training in games and exercises like wrestling, boxing, running, riding,

¹ F. W. Cornish, *Chivalry*.

tilting at the ring, etc., and in amusements like bull-baiting and bear-baiting. The page became a squire on the completion of the period of apprenticeship. Squires were of two types, *viz.*, those who expected promotion to knighthood later, and those who did not. Squires carved in the hall, handed in plates, served the wine, followed by varlets or pages bearing the dishes, supplied water for the guests to wash their hands with after dinner, made the bed for the lord, helped him to dress and to undress, brought him sleeping-draughts, slept in his room if desired, groomed the horses, held and kept them ready, looked after the armour, armed the lord for the tourney and handed over to him fresh lances¹ in the lists. Squires and pages also waited on the ladies in the castle, played draughts and chess with them in bowers, walked with them in the garden and rode with them when they went out hunting or hawking.

While this scheme of training for young men was comprehensive in a sense, intellectual culture had no place in it; and 'courtesy' seems to have been concerned only with manners, physical exercise and military training. Scholarship was almost exclusively theological, and was the monopoly of the churchmen. Manuals of poetry, grammar, heraldry, etc., were indeed composed, but they

¹ F. W. Cornish, *Chivalry*.

were far less common than theological works in Latin, the favourite language of churchmen, but little understood by the people. Manuscripts of important books not being available for transcription, teaching was oral and therefore confined to a few. There were unbeneficed clerics and needy self-taught Troubadours who sometimes earned a little money by teaching pages. Ladies of the castle, too, who had often more of literary education than feudal lords, acted as instructresses to these boys. Barons and knights could just read and write. But there were also noblemen in high positions who could not. Signature, in their case, meant the mere making of a mark on the document. Many knew how to play on the harp and to sing. Tristram is " harper, huntsman and liege man " to King Mark, and he is often found singing in the King's castle. *Jongleurs* or minstrels were professional singers, but they had no pretensions to culture.

The system of training of the youth prevalent in the Feudal epoch was largely responsible for the production of handbooks of manners and of table courtesy. Though incidental references to manners and etiquette have been discovered in Cicero, Quintilian, Plutarch and Horace, there was no literature, in ancient Greece and Rome, " exclusively devoted to the niceties of conduct."¹ This had

¹ *Gentlefolk in the Making*, p. 18.

its beginning in the writings of Church Fathers and mediæval rulers. Some of them wrote admonitory letters and treatises to relatives and friends. Ethical wills composed by Jewish and Christian writers during the Middle Ages contained what has been called parental advice. Social hierarchies were recognised in those times along with the democratic claim of equality, and ecclesiastical as well as secular authorities wrote books defining the duties of the various classes of people—soldiers, judges, labourers, nobles, kings, etc. Petrus Alphonsus,¹ a converted Jew, wrote a book containing rules of behaviour and the proprieties of the table, which had a wide vogue, and was frequently translated. A medical treatise composed about 1050-1100 A.D. gives "advice on personal cleanliness and on diet, which reappears, practically unaltered, in mediæval civility books." Admonitions² on manners are also found in mediæval handbooks of languages.³ Books on manners "written in Latin and often bearing the title *Facetus* became very popular. They were translated, adapted and

¹ For an English version of Alphonsus, see *Western Reserve University Bulletin*, n. s., Vol. 22, No. 3.

² C. H. Haskins, *Studies in Mediæval Culture*.

³ The best known of such handbooks in the sixteenth century were the *Colloquies* of Erasmus and Vives. "One whole section of Erasmus' *Colloquies*, 'the School master's Admonitions,' is a treatise on manners"; and this served as a pattern for later writers like John Clarke.

imitated all over Europe," developing an extensive popular literature on behaviour, both in Latin and in the vernacular tongues.¹

Courtesy books appeared in most of the European countries affected by Feudalism. Arnaut Guillaume de Marson and Amanieu² de Sescas wrote in Provençal and French about the twelfth century on the duties of servants. *Les contenance de la table* dealt with table manners, while French works like *Le Livre³ du Chevalier de la Tour-Landry* and *Le Ménagier⁴ de Paris* discussed domestic life and morals. *Regime pour Tous Serviteurs* was a handbook for servants. The earliest German courtesy books were composed in the thirteenth century, and they form the subject of an essay by E. Oswald.⁵ Of Italian

¹ It was the material of the *Facetus* that Erasmus reduced to a system in his *De Civilitate Morum Puerilium*, a work which exerted a great influence on subsequent civility literature.—*Gentlefolk in the Making*, p. 18.

² T. F. Crane, *Italian Social Customs of the Sixteenth Century*, Ch. 7.

³ English translation in EETSOS. 33.

⁴ It was written by a wealthy Frenchman in 1393, and was translated later into English as *The Good Man of Paris*. There were also Anglo-Norman books of courtesy and nurture (PMLA, 44, pp. 383-455). Some Latin and some French books on these topics appear with their English versions in EETSOS. 32. Pt. 2.

⁵ See EETSOS. 8. Pt. 2, p. 77.

courtesy books the earliest was Brunetto Latini's *Tesoretto*, which deals with propriety of speech, conduct, etc. Fra Bonvicino's and Francesco da Barberino's books discuss more specially what is called table courtesy.¹

The Feudal practice of sending boys to noble-men's households for training had greater vogue in England than elsewhere in Europe, and it also persisted there longer,² though with modifications. In England, however, boys were put not only in the households of lay peers, but also in those of church dignitaries. The system was prevalent in the days of Henry II (1154-89), if not earlier, and continued in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. T. Wright suggests that it was akin to fosterage, and resembled an Anglo-Saxon custom according to which a Teuton chieftain gathered round his person a troop of young retainers in his hall. They were voluntary servants who alone were privileged to touch his person. The training imparted was described as "nurture." It might have differed in different households, but the underlying idea of improving "nature" through "nurture" was always present. Youths of all classes, high and low, could profit by the system, though, naturally, the lower classes did not or could not avail themselves of the opportunity to any

¹ W. M. Rossetti, *Italian Courtesy Books*, in the EETS, 8, Pt. 2. See also *MLR*, Vol. 5, pp. 145-50.

² R. W. Chambers, Introduction to EETS, 148, p. 6.

large extent. Furnivall points¹ out how the six "Henxmen" (henchmen) of King Edward IV's court in England had exactly the same position as the pages of a typical feudal baron. There was a "Maistyr of Henxmen" whose duty was to teach them "urbanitie and nourture of Englonde, to lerne them to ryde clenely and surely; to drawe them also to justes...to haue all curtesy in wordes, dedes, and degrees; ...to teche them sondry languages (possibly only French and Latin) and othyr lerninges vertuous, to harping, to pype, sing, daunce, and with other honest and temperate behaviour and patience....This maistyr sittith in the halle, next unto these Henxmen, at the same boarde, to have his respecte unto theyre demeanynge, howe manerly they ete and drinke, and to theyre communication and other formes curiall, after *the booke of urbanitie*."¹ These young men were all nobly descended, and "everyche of them (had) an honest servaunt to keepe theyre chambre and harneys, and to aray hym in this courte whyles theyre maisters be present in courte." Henchmen like these sometimes achieved distinction later in life, and rose to high ranks.

Even the Chancellors of the Realm admitted boys to their households for purposes of training.

¹ Quoted from the *Liber Niger* of Edward IV, in Furnivall's Forewords to *Manners and Meals in Olden Time*, p. ii, EETSOS, 32.



They were not only learned men themselves, but had also patronage in their gift. Some of the Chancellors were cruel, and this is what was said of one of them (*viz.*, Longchamps, the Bishop of Ely): “ All the sons of the nobles acted as his servants, with downcast looks, nor dared they to look upward towards the heavens unless it so happened that they were addressing him.” The Earl of Arundell, who had put his son under the Bishop of Norwich, wrote to him in 1620: “ You shall in all Things reverence honour and obey my Lord Bishop of Norwich, as you would do any of your Parents . . . and in all things esteem yourself as my Lord’s Page; a *breeding* which youths of my house far superior to you were accustomed unto.”¹ Sir Thomas More was brought up in the house of Cardinal Morton who was reported to have once prophesied to the nobles who had come to dine with him: “ This child here waiting at the table, whosoever shall live to see it, will prove a marvellous man.” King Henry once asked, in wonder, the Bishop of Lincoln where he had learnt the “ nurture ” in which he “ instructed the sons of nobles and peers of the Realm, whom he kept about him as *pages*.” The Bishop, who had been born of humble parents, replied: “ In the house or guest-

¹ Furnivall’s Forewords to *Manners and Meals in Olden Time*, p. ix.

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chambers of greater Kings than the King of England." Girls, too, were sent out to noblemen's families for training, e.g., Anne Boleyn and her sister were sent to Margaret of Savoy, aunt of Charles V, to learn courtesy.¹

There was also a practice amongst tradesmen, in later times, of putting their children in other people's houses as apprentices. "After having kept them at home till they arrive at the age of 7 or 9 years at the utmost, they put them out, both males and females, to hard service in the houses of other people, binding them generally for another 7 or 9 years. And these are called apprentices, and during that time they perform all the most *menial offices*; and few are born who are exempted from this fate, for every one, however rich he may be, sends away his children into the houses of others, whilst he, in return, receives those of strangers into his own."²

In mediæval England too the intellectual pabulum offered to the youth trained under the system described above, was very slight. Edward IV's henchmen were taught a little of grammar only. Generally speaking, people hardly appreciated the value of education for its own sake. On the contrary, there was a sort of

¹ Sometimes governesses were appointed for the home education of girls. See Furnivall's Forewords, p. xvi.

² *A Relation of the Island of England*, pp. 24-25, tr. Charlotte Augusta Sneyd.

contempt for literary studies. Some provision for these indeed existed in schools attached to religious houses and cathedrals, but only the Trivium, Quadrivium, French and Latin (in small doses) seem to have been the principal subjects of study.¹ Greek was first taught at school by Lillye only after 1500. This unsatisfactory provision for education and the listlessness of all classes of people evoked the censure of men who had come under the influence of the Revival of Learning. Endowments for educational purposes now began to flow in; as a result, Grammar Schools and Colleges in the University towns multiplied. But before this fresh impetus came, education of the youth chiefly comprised “nurture,” i.e., a training in manners. They were called “Yonge Babees,” “Bele Babees” and “swete children.” English courtesy books which appeared during this period were addressed to “yonkers of account, youthes of good houses, children of rich parents,” partly to carvers and servants, “partly to schoolboys, partly to people in general, or at least those of them who were willing to take advice as to how they should mend their manners and live a healthy life.” The “nurture” contemplated in these works was meant to be a sort of finishing touch to their previous training at home or at school. Their manners and personal habits, even after

¹ See pp. xxi-xxiii of Furnivall's Forewords.

such training, were not very commendable. They were dirty, ill-mannered and awkward in their movements, and instructions for personal cleanliness and good manners were badly needed by them. "If rich men and masters were dirty, poor men and servants must have been dirtier still." Of the English courtesy books, some of the earliest and best-known belonged to the fifteenth century.¹ They contain rules on manners and behaviour, and suggestions on personal hygiene and cleanly habits. Some give rules of cookery and service, while others discuss questions of interest to the feudal age in which they had their origin, e.g., classification of people into various orders (like knights, barons, gentlemen, yeomen, esquires, etc.), order of precedence amongst the nobles, the duties of the officers attached to their households, etc. These books set forth sometimes a theory of nobility which was declared to depend not on descent, as the feudal aristocracy believed, but on education and manners. William of Wykeham, the founder of Winchester College (1393), adopted for its motto the sentence "Manners maketh Man." John Rastell's book *Of Gentylnes and Nobyltye* (1525 ?) was a spirited exposition of this view. The most important English courtesy book is John Russell's *Boke of Nurture*, in which the author probably corrected and touched up some earlier work which

¹ F. B. Millet, *English Courtesy Literature before 1557*.

he had read in his youth. It is a “ complete manual for the valet, butler, footman, carver, taster, dinner-arranger, usher and marshal.” *Bishop Grosseteste’s Household Statutes* is a manual for servants. The *Boke of Curtasye*¹ is similar to Russell’s treatise. It deals with manners in general, as well as table courtesy, and also gives directions on behaviour at church, rules of service, the duties of outdoor as well as indoor servants, etc.. *The Curial*, translated from the French by Caxton, is a dissertation on the evils of the courtier’s life.² The *Babees Book* (c. 1475) is a short poem referring to “Facet” as an authority, and calling on “Lady Facetia” for guidance. It provides instruction for “young children of noble or even royal blood” concerning behaviour at table. A Latin poem, *Stans puer ad mensam*, was in circulation in its English version early in the sixteenth century. It gives rules of conduct for boys in noblemen’s households, and inspired other courtesy books.³ Part of

¹ Contained in Sloane MS. 1986, c. 1460 A.D.

² Published in EETSSES, 54: originally printed in 1484.

³ Prof. R. W. Chambers points out a difference between English and Italian courtesy books which had an earlier origin. The former give the rules of service due from the page to the lord, while the latter think of guests dining together. This, however, is not always the case. The contrast seems to demonstrate the influence of feudal institutions on English courtesy books.

Hugh Rhodes' *Boke of Nurture* is a free expansion of *Stans puer*, and is in verse.¹ Richard Whitford's *Worke for Householdiers* (1537) contains admonitions on behaviour, and deals with topics like oaths, lying, conduct in church, etc. Wynkyn de Worde published his *Boke of Keruyng and Sewyng* in 1508. It is a prose version of Russell's book, and is one of the most interesting courtesy books of the period. There is remarkable similarity of phrasing between the two. The anonymous *A Health to the Gentlemanly Profession of Serving Men* (1598) describes the dignified position of servants in wealthy families in the past, and laments its disappearance.

Seager's *Schoole of Vertue* (1557) was meant for children in their homes rather than for those in noblemen's households, and was at one time used as a regular text-book in schools. It suggested the titles of two later treatises, viz., *The Schoole of Good Manners : or a New Schoole of Vertue* by W. F. Fiston (1595), and *The School of Vertue* (in verse) by R. Weste. A poem in the latter seems to have been an abstract of a portion of Seager's work. Thomas Prichard's *Schoole of Honest and Vertuous Life* (1579) and Edmund Coote's *Englishe Scholemaister* (1596) were popular books on behaviour in their days.

¹ The edition of Petyt was printed before 1554, but it is the edition of 1577 that is published in EETSOS, 32.

Homely admonition on morals and behaviour, suggested by worldly wisdom and plain common-sense, apart from the influence of feudal institutions, is to be met with in a number of treatises, e.g., the Middle English *How the Wise Man Taught his Son*,¹ *How the Goode Wyfe Taught hyr Doughter*,² *The Good Wyfe wold a Pylgremage*,³ *How a Wyse Man Taught Hys Sone*,⁴ *How the Good Wijf Taughte hir Doughtir*,⁵ etc.

¹ EETSOS, 32.

³ EETSES, 8.

⁵ EETSOS, 32.

² EETSES, 8.

⁴ *Ibid.*



CHAPTER II

RENAISSANCE COURTESY

The Feudal System with its institutions spread over different parts of Europe in different shapes. "Its most logical form, French Feudalism, conquered England, Northern Spain, the two Sicilies and the Levant, while a less fully evolved form, German Feudalism, adapted itself to the institutions of the Low Countries and the North of Italy."¹ The *allod* was forcibly changed into the fief by the feudal lord more promptly and more extensively in England, France and the Low Countries than in Germany, Spain and North Italy. Some parts of Italy, like Florence, Urbino and Venice, were really very little affected by Feudalism. Its decay generally led to the growth of the monarchical State. As feudal lords came under the king, wars became rarer. Monarchs like William the Conqueror ruled their kingdoms with a strong hand, giving their subjects the blessings of peace. The condition of the masses improved in consequence in many respects. The Church too continued to lend them its helping hand, and Papacy and the monastic orders went on with their efforts to free them from bondage and to

¹ P. Boissonnade, *Life and Work in Medieval Europe*, tr. E. Power, p. 120.

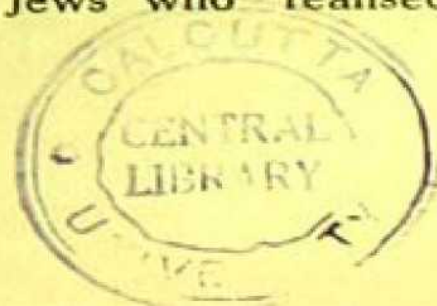
uplift them. Equality of all in the eye of God was preached by churchmen, and their teachings inspired movements against the payment of seigniorial dues and arbitrary taxes. Hospitals and lazar-houses were established through their efforts. Gradually communications improved, rivers were bridged, and means of transport came into existence, linking villages and towns and improving trade. Markets and fairs grew in numbers, and economic isolation disappeared to some extent. Kings as well as churches issued coins, and money economy helped commerce. In place of the local traders of early feudal times, trading middlemen now made their appearance.

In parts of Italy where Feudalism had no strong hold, the civic and economic conditions of the people improved more quickly. The crusades and the spread of Christianity opened the Mediterranean trade-route to the East which was formerly accessible only by the Danube route, and the Italians, helped by other Europeans, wrested valuable commerce from the Turks and the Arabs, and even attempted to seize the trade of the Black Sea and of the Sea of Azov. Commercial missions like that of Marco Polo were sent to different countries of the East. The Mediterranean trade stimulated in Europe manufactures like tanning, glass-making and weaving. Milan alone employed about 60,000 people in fine cloth making, and Venice, Bologna, Modena and Verona each employed almost an equal number.

Credit was required for commercial ventures,¹ and monied people combined and established institutions comparable to limited liability companies of modern times. Powerful Italian banking concerns soon appeared in Florence, Siena, Venice, Lombardy and Piedmont. In place of loans on pledges (for short periods and at high rates of interest), less burdensome forms of credit came into existence, e.g., loans against negotiable securities. Thus the sources of wealth, which had been open only to the Byzantine and the Eastern nations, were now accessible to the industrial, commercial and banking classes—as distinct from the landed aristocracy—in Europe, and chiefly in Italy.

The first effect of this commercial prosperity was the resurrection of town-life. The old Roman cities in Italy revived in most cases, as they were on the great trade-route. But *burghs* also grew up afresh under the shelter of monasteries and strong castles. At first merchants and artisans lived in a state of subordination in the “little towns of feudal era . . . and usually had to bow to the authority of several rival masters—bishop, abbot, count, governor and feudal lord.” But the

¹ According to mediæval law, usury was to be condemned where money was borrowed to meet ordinary expenses. But interest was permitted on loans taken for purposes of investment. Hence Jews who realised interest in all cases were hated.





richest of them soon came to form an aristocracy, and " even approached so closely to the nobility as sometimes to be reckoned noble." Some of them even gave their daughters in marriage to scions of ancient families. They next tried to assert themselves and grasp power. Merchants living in the suburbs of the fortified towns first sought in voluntary association the means of defence which the feudal authorities could not always provide in the worst days of disorder. They soon grew bolder. At Venice about the middle of the tenth century they broke the monarchical power of the Doge, at Milan between the tenth and eleventh centuries that of the Archbishop, and at Piacenza, Lodi, Cremona and other places that of the feudal nobility a little later.¹ Gradually, " a small number of towns in Italy, Southern and Northern France . . . where commercial life was most fully developed, reached complete independence, and formed real States, bourgeois republics, on the same footing as the old feudal States." Here the citizens enjoyed equal rights, and there were no special privileges for any section or class. There were, however, feudal castles and abbeys outside, with their class distinctions. But the feudal lords were often compelled to come and live in these towns,

¹ P. Boissonnade, *Life and Work in Medieval Europe*, tr. E. Power, pp. 193-94.



and become members of the democracy. Thus, though there yet existed many seigniorial districts, great urban cities with large populations also grew prominent. Palermo had a population of 500,000 in the twelfth century, Milan and Venice over 100,000 each, and Florence 100,000. The wealthy merchants loved their own cities and tried to promote their welfare. Culture and freedom of thought flourished in them in due course, and they were adorned with market-places, piazzas, halls, bridges, quays, cathedrals, etc. The merchant patriciates, which took upon themselves the defence of their communes, and formed themselves into military associations (*società d'armi*), had their military leaders called knights, as distinct from the feudal lords.

It was in these advanced States that the revival of classical learning took place, and Renaissance courtesy was gradually evolved. People who had been liberated from feudal tyranny and social inequality and redeemed from poverty and economic isolation, found here an opportunity for education and for the cultivation of the softer graces of life. Wealthy men like the Medicis became patrons of art and literature, and delighted in the company of savants and artists. Commerce and international concerns in which Italy now took a prominent part produced men of action who could handle large affairs and excelled in diplomacy. Learned men

with refined manners looked for fit partners in life, and female education was encouraged, leading to the emergence of witty, intellectual and brilliant women.¹

Il Cortegiano of Baldesar Castiglione is generally looked upon as the handbook of Renaissance courtesy. High birth, comprehensive culture including interest in poetry, painting, etc., physical beauty, skill in wielding weapons, proficiency in games and manual exercises of various kinds, sense of honour, wit, elocution and charm of personality, are mentioned in it, along with a capacity for noble love, as the desirable qualifications of a courtier. Woman is expected to be the congenial companion of the accomplished and brilliant man of this type, and special suggestions are made for her education. *Il Cortegiano* soon became the model of other courtesy books in Italy. In the *Discorsi* by Annibale Romei the ground traversed is more or less the same as in the *Cortegiano*. *Il Nennio* of Nenna deals only with the question of the relative importance of wealth, supported by high ancestry, and learning, while Stephano Guazzo's *La Civil Conversatione* is more concerned with the usefulness of conversation and its style, though it discusses female education and domestic relations as well. Its fourth book has a dramatic touch—

¹ J. Burckhardt, *The Civilisation of the period of the Renaissance in Italy*, tr. S. G. C. Middlemore, Pt. V, Ch. V.

though in no way comparable to that in the *Cortegiano*. A parlour game is started with the election of a queen, but the object is not to discuss anything so comprehensive as the conception of an all-round Renaissance courtier. Muzio's *Gentilhuomo* lays no stress on external graces or beauty, but insists on virtue only. *Il Galateo* of Giovanni della Casa is strictly a courtesy book dealing exclusively with manners and behaviour. None of these treatises, however, has such a wide scope as the *Cortegiano*, and none treats the whole personality of man.

Italian courtesy as sketched above is not radically different from the chivalric. Attractive ideals are seldom quite original. Von Jhering says that the courtly ideal of nobility, combined with learning and military skill, is as old as Constantinople and Babylon.¹ Chivalry, with its knightly manners, imperceptibly merges into courtesy—just as Feudalism gradually shades off into democracy, and the Middle Ages lead, almost unobserved, into the Renaissance. The difference between the two is in most cases a difference of insistence—of degree rather than of kind—and is mostly due to changes in the surrounding circumstances. In the Renaissance, arms still remained the real profession of the courtier, almost as much as they were in the days of knight-errantry. Physical culture,

¹ *Evolution of the Aryan*, pp. 94-98.

—running, jumping, riding, fencing, wrestling, hunting, etc.—had also the same importance. Good birth was still regarded as valuable, though virtue and learning were looked upon as superior accomplishments without which ancestry sank into insignificance. But Chaucer and Dante, both lovers of chivalry, had also the same opinion of virtue, if not of learning. In his 'Moral Balade' entitled *Gentillesse*, the former says that one who claims to be 'gentil' or noble, must be ready "vertu to sewe," though his Parson admits "ther is degree above degree, as reson is, and skile it is that men do hir devoir ther as it is due." In the *Wife of Bath's Tale* Chaucer discusses the question fully, and comes to the conclusion that "genterye is nat annexed to possessioun," for even the lord's son is often boorish and vicious. In the fourth part of the *Convito* Dante repudiates the 'false thought' that nobility depends on wealth or ancestry, and says in one of his canzones that "Nobility (or gentility) exists wherever virtue is." He is not, however, so uncompromisingly in favour of virtue in *De Monarchia* where he defines nobility as "Virtue and ancient wealth."¹ Even a woman like Criseyde in Chaucer realises the worth of virtue. She frankly tells Troilus why she yielded to him:

"—trusteth wel, that your estat réal,
Ne veyn delit, nor only worthinesse

¹ *Convito*, IV, 2; *MLR.*, Vol. 5, p. 148.

Of you in werre or torney marcial.
 Ne pompe. array, nobléye, or ek richesse
 Ne madé me to rewe on your distresse ;
 But moral vertu, grounded upon trouthe:
 That was the cause I first had on you routhe!"

The Renaissance recommends grace and amiability to the courtier. Chivalric 'courtoisie' probably means something more than these, viz., meekness. In Chaucer Troilus is a type of chivalric courtesy. Though he is brave as a lion in fight, his manners are 'goodly.' He casts his eyes down when people praise him on his return from the battle-field, and is gentle as the meekest in Troy, humble and diligent to serve. The Knight in the *Prologue* is meek and Christ-like in his behaviour. In Chaucer gentleness (i.e., courtesy) is almost akin to saintliness or godliness, for he attributes "gentillesse" to the Virgin. Sense of honour is, if anything, keener in the chivalric age than in the Renaissance.

The difference between the two has to be traced to the connection of chivalry with religion, and its comparative indifference to intellectual culture. The Catholic Church furnished the inspiration to chivalry, while classical thought was in the background of Italian courtesy. Worship of the Virgin, the teachings of the lives of the Saints, the conception of evil against which the Christian was to fight all his life, asceticism and renunciation left their traces on the chivalric ideal, whereas the

manners and educational system of the Romans, Stoicism and the enthusiasm born of the spirit of the Renaissance inspired Italian humanism and the ideal of courtesy. Classical studies had given an impulse to freedom of speculation, and in place of Christian theology, Greek and Neo-Platonic philosophies exerted their influence on Renaissance thinkers. Economic and political systems ushered in by the new age had also their effect. Commerce and contact with the outside world had widened the vision of the Italians, and the narrow outlook of the past disappeared. The virtues developed in the isolated castle and the secluded township paled into insignificance in the age when the Mediterranean route linked the large industrial cities of Italy with the market of " the gorgeous East," and international affair came to be transacted in this country, requiring in its statesmen astuteness, affability and eloquence. The attributes of the public man, who was quite unknown in the days of chivalry, now came to be highly valued. In Renaissance Italy wealth gave the leisured classes an opportunity for culture, and the wit, graceful manners and intellectual attainments of the brilliant people—bankers, city councillors, churchmen, politicians, scholars—who met in their palaces, had no parallel in the Feudal age. The relation between the sexes was changed, and woman was no longer worshipped as the Madonna or abhorred as Eve, but was

admitted as man's equal to free social life. Education and manners were therefore regarded as equally important in her case.

Intellectual culture in its maturity, coupled with social virtues and public activity, led almost to the same consummation in Italy of the *cinquecento* as it had done in the ancient world. The ancients had identified "artes et mores." Their culture had been transformed into a new mode of life. This was typified in the orator, the enlightened democratic statesman, the friend and the patriotic captain sprung from the ranks. In them intellectual and even moral virtues had been transmuted into ways of life and of speech. Something like this took place in Renaissance Italy too. The object of education was life and action—often described as service to the prince. In an atmosphere of social activity and culture, the Florentine banker, the Venetian merchant-adventurer and the prince of the city-state recognised merit only as reflected in personality. It was this that constituted civic virtue which was thus a combination of scholarship, eloquence and knightly qualities. As it has been aptly put, "The prime virtues of the community, 'temperantia' and 'prudentia,' which it is one of the chief ends of classical instruction to enforce, shade off imperceptibly from high moral impulse to the bearing and gesture becoming to the citizen of no mean city. That moral worth and uncouthness are compatible, was not readily intelligible to the man

of the Renaissance.”¹ The Renaissance courtier’s² movements, studies, etc., revealed the quality of his soul, as did the classical statesman’s. But it was his speech that was the special index of his personality. For the most characteristic trait of the Italian Renaissance was the art of graceful speech—“il bel parlare,” “il parlar gentil.” “The development, under the compelling precedent of Plato and Cicero, of the Dialogue, was perhaps the peculiar vogue of the mid and latter Renaissance.” It has thus been rightly said that “the society in which Castiglione’s ideal courtier moves is one of refinement in manners and ease in speech.”³ This facility of speech, involving precision, lucidity, wit, repartee, imagination and eloquence, was learnt mostly in diplomatic spheres, in the city council and in social circles where beauty and loveliness shed their lustre.

Castiglione’s book is not primarily either a social code or a dissertation on the merits of the courtier. There are undoubtedly suggestions in it about these, but the author does not seriously intend to teach manners, prudence or grace, and says frankly that the virtues of the courtier are

¹ W. H. Woodward, *Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance*, p. 247.

² See E. N. S. Thompson, *Literary Byways of the Renaissance* (1924), p. 160.

³ See F. O. Matthiessen, *Translation: An Elizabethan Art*.

the gifts of nature. The difference between the *Cortegiano* and the educational works of the Humanists has been described as "the difference ¹ between a highly cultivated society and one whose intellectual development had just begun." The former is a work of art teeming with dramatic situations, as distinct from a treatise, and it depicts real and living courtiers, and 'gentlewomen of the palace' graceful in speech and supremely attractive. The reader has actually before him finished portraits of the brightest specimens of human perfection as Italian Renaissance conceived it. Lord Gaspar, Frederico Fregoso, Lord Julian, Lady Emilia Pia are personifications of culture which finds full expression in sprightly repartee, flashing wit and winning manners. This is why the *Cortegiano* was destined to graft "a new sense of personality" on Europe to which no parallel could be found in the past.

England's reaction to the influence of Renaissance Italy was not unmixed. There were aspects of Italian life and manners which many in England did not like, and some severely condemned. This was mostly due to the exaggerated rumours of Italian vices, which were current in Elizabethan England. Italianism was severely censured by writers like Greene,² Lyly,³ Nash,⁴ Ascham⁵

¹ F. O. Matthiessen, *Translation : An Elizabethan Art.*

² See *The Art of Conny-Catching.*

³ See *Euphues : The Anatomy of Wyt.*

⁴ See *Pierce Penilesse.*

⁵ See *The Scholemaster.*



and others. But Italian courtesy as depicted in the *Cortegiano* was warmly welcomed in England. Ascham highly praised Castiglione's book, and recommended it to young people whom he had advised to shun everything Italian. He regretted sincerely that it was not carefully studied in his country. Gabriel Harvey referred to its author's popularity at Cambridge.¹ Sidney had a copy of the book in his pocket when he was travelling on the Continent. Raleigh was regarded as the embodiment of the combined virtues of the courtier, the soldier and the scholar. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Bk. VI, was an allegory of Italian courtesy.

The popularity of the *Cortegiano* in Europe may be gauged from the fact that, between 1528 and 1616 (the year of Shakespeare's death), it had passed through about 108 editions in French, Latin, German, English and Spanish versions. In Italy the book had been in circulation in manuscript even before its publication. The year 1528 saw the publication of two Italian editions. The rapidity with which the foreign translations were brought out, was amazing. The first Spanish version came out in 1534, the first French version in 1537, the first Latin and English versions in 1561, and the first German version in 1566.²

¹ In one of his letters. See *Spenser* in the E. M. L. Series, p. 25.

² See the Appendix to Opdycke's English Translation of the *Cortegiano*.

In England Hoby's *Courtier* was reprinted in 1577, in 1588 (along with the original Italian text and a French version) and in 1603. The appeal which the ideal of courtesy made to the English mind, as much as a general craving for things Italian, were subsequently responsible for the rapid translation of other Italian works on the subject into English. An English translation of *Il Galateo* was published in 1576, and English translations of (the French version of) the first three books of Guazzo's *La Civile Conversazione* (1581), of Book IV of the same treatise (1586), of Nenna's *Il Nennio* with adulatory sonnets by Day, Spenser, Daniel and Chapman (1595), of Romei's *Discorsi* (1598) and of other Italian courtesy books came out in quick succession.¹

Crane has pointed out in his well-known book *Italian Social Customs of the Sixteenth Century* the influence in England of the literary form of the *Cortegiano*. It is noticeable in works like Greene's *Euphues his censure to Philautus* (1587), *Penelope's Web* (1587) and *Morando* (1584-87). But apart from its form, its discussions on courtesy inspired native works in England, dealing with conduct, morals and the marks of nobility in imitation of foreign treatises. The English translations of other Italian courtesy books undoubtedly added to the inspiration. The influence

¹ See Mary Augusta Scott, *Elizabethan Translations from the Italian*.

of Italy was also revealed in the fact that the English gentleman, discussed in some of the indigenous works, was supposed to be the counterpart of the Italian courtier of the Renaissance. Some of the most important of these were the anonymous *Institution of a Gentleman* (1555), Lawrence Humphrey's *Nobles* (originally written in Latin, but translated in 1563), Sir Humphrey Gilbert's *Queene Elizabethes Achademy* (c. 1572), *On Civil and Uncivil Life* (1579) reprinted later as *The English Courtier and the Country-Gentleman*, and James Cleland's *Institution of a Young Nobleman* (1607). Translated foreign books of the same type, like La Primaudaye's *French Academy* (1589) and La Perrière's *Mirror of Policy* (1598), were frequently quoted and relied on by the English writers.¹

¹ A fuller list is given in Ruth Kelso's book *The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century* (1929). Bacon never wrote a conduct book, but his essays deal with many topics familiar in courtesy literature of the sixteenth century—friendship, the education of children, travel, etc. The *Essays* (1600) of Sir William Cornwallis and the *Essaies* (1601) of Robert Johnson contain numerous references to manners and social institutions. "Closely akin to the essay was the collection of characters, in which typical embodiments or types were presented with satiric or didactic aim," and the attributes typified were in many cases identical with those dealt with in courtesy literature.

Italian courtesy, as already explained, had something in common with the classical ideals of conduct and culture, and the English Humanists who had tried to reform education and society through the infusion of the latter, had served to create an atmosphere for these later discussions on manners and personality inspired by Italian courtesy literature. Erasmus (1466-1536) was one of the foreigners who tried to graft Humanism on England. The scholars whom he met during his earlier visit were the pioneers of classical renaissance in England. Of these, Grocyn and Linacre taught Greek in Oxford, while More was their disciple and friend. On his return from Italy, Erasmus lectured at Cambridge, and it was his influence that led to the foundation of Christ's College, which devoted itself to humanistic studies. His Humanism, however, meant an exclusive love of the classics and classical ideals in society, politics, etc., and was not in full sympathy with the cravings of the new epoch. He disliked the vernaculars, hated wars, and possibly dreamt of universal humanity, with Latin as the universal language and Christianity as the universal church. Though, being a monk, he was not fond of physical culture, he yet recognised the connection between humanistic studies and manners. "He pours out his scorn upon the petty lords of the soil whom he knew in German lands, their *arrogance* and their *boorishness*, their mean concept

of life, their coarse self-indulgence . . . he expects no more from them, for they ridicule learning, despise education, and hold a scholar on a lower level than their groom or their cook.”¹ More (1478-1535) imbibed a profound love of Greek literature, especially of Plato.² He was sceptical about the old (mediæval) order of things, and was against School Logic, but had not succeeded in forming any new idea of education and personality in consonance with the spirit of his age. He sneered at the nobility for their “vain and unprofitable honours”—“it was their fortune to come of such ancestors whose stock of long time had been counted rich, especially rich in lands.” Their love of hunting, hawking, dice, etc., and their abhorrence of “intellectual pleasures” excited his undisguised contempt. Unlike Erasmus, he appreciated music, and was in favour of bodily exercise in moderation. Juan Luis Vives (1492-1540), a friend of Erasmus, was invited to England by Wolsey in 1523 to take the Readership in Humanity at Oxford. He was tutor to Princess Mary, and wrote a treatise in Latin on female education (1523). He stressed the importance not only of Greek and of Latin (which was to be the universal

¹ W. H. Woodward, *Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance*, p. 115.

² He draws on the *Republic* and the *Laws*.

spoken language), but also of the vernacular without the help of which the classics could not, in his opinion, be taught efficiently. Vives was not a supporter of asceticism; yet he encouraged physical exercise only as a means of securing efficient intellectual activity. He advocated better education for girls who did not come under the influence of the Revival of Learning in northern Europe before 1520, except in rare cases.¹ Vives would teach them Latin (Cicero and Seneca) and Greek (Plato and Plutarch), along with the vernacular, the Bible, cookery, poetry, etc., but no modern romance. This syllabus was not very different from that of the schools of the Middle Ages. Woman, according to Vives, should be devout and high-principled, the sympathetic and intelligent companion of man; but he could not conceive her as the brilliant social force of the Renaissance, with wit, sprightliness and charm. Elyot, Ascham and Mulcaster were not merely advocates of the new learning, as were their three predecessors, but were also concerned with methods of instruction. Mulcaster and Ascham were themselves teachers. Though all the three were in greater touch with the new spirit of the age, it is noteworthy that, like the other

¹ *The Instruction of a Christian Woman* by Vives, which was translated from Latin into English about 1529 (?), occupies a place in the literature of education similar to that of Elyot's *Governour*.

Humanists inspired with a zeal for reform and enlightenment, they supported education more on prudential and moral than on broad cultural grounds. Elyot was well-read in classical and Italian literatures, and was in touch with continental scholars. He owed some of his ideas to Castiglione and Machiavelli. “The Governour,” says a critic, “was the English aspect of the ideal Italian Courtier.”¹ “True nobility,” according to Elyot, “is personal merit. . . . But inherited repute, title, lands, position, are accounted nobility also.” This falls in with the view of Castiglione. Like the latter, Elyot stresses the importance of the classics, history, the vernacular, the fine arts, and physical exercise of all kinds, including running, dancing and shooting, and he relies for support on the ancients. With Erasmus, Elyot regrets that a gentleman should think it a reproach to be called a scholar. He wants to enlist educated people in the service of the State, and here, again, he is a follower of the Italian author. But Elyot insists on the study of the Bible, and thus wants to use education as a means of moral uplift—a plan which Castiglione would not possibly have approved. Ascham, like Erasmus and More, regrets the neglect of learning by

¹ W. H. Woodward, *Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance*, p. 292.

the nobility, and in the Preface to *The Scholemaster* he refers to faulty methods of teaching as its main cause. "It is pitie, that commonlie, more care is had, yea and that emonges verie wise men, to finde out rather a cunnyng man for their horse, than a cunnyng man for their children. For, to the one, they will gladlie give a stipend of 200 crounes by yeare, and loth to offer to the other, 200 shillings." In the manner of Castiglione, he declares that noble descent, learning and virtue are all needful in an educated man whose object should be to serve his Prince. He has this practical end in view as well as Elyot. He explains Plato's ideal as real harmony between mind and body, along with perfection of voice, face, person, etc., and, like Elyot, he encourages physical exercise as a means of securing it. By *Euphues* (lit. of good natural parts) Plato means one who is "apte by goodnes of witte, and appliable by readines of will, to learning, having all other qualities of the minde and partes of the bodie that must an other day serve learning."¹ But his intense love of virtue and strict morality makes Ascham rather blind to the aesthetic aspect of culture, and he cannot grasp the finer strains of Italian Renaissance. He was a good Protestant, and education was with him a bulwark of religion. In his Dedication of *Positions*

¹ *The Scholemaster.*

(1581) to Queen Elizabeth, Mulcaster describes the object of the book to be “to enrich their (*i.e.*, young people’s) *minds* with learning and to enable their *bodies* with health,” as both are needed for the service of the Prince. “For the matter of their learning, that is there divided into two parts, the one whereof is knowledge, to increase *understanding*, the other is behaviour, to enlarge *virtue*.”¹ Music is taken by him² “to prove a double principle both for the soule, by the name of *learning*, and for the body, by the way of *exercise*.” He repeatedly refers to Plato and to his view of the connection between body and soul, as well as to Vives, and recommends wrestling, fencing, walking, leaping, swimming, shooting and also dancing. The subjects approved for study include painting, drawing, the classics and music. Physical as well as mental training is prescribed for girls too. Lyly equally admires the Greek idea of harmonious development of the human faculties. His essay on Education (*Euphues and his Ephæbus*), based as it was on Plutarch, was intended to suggest means for the healthy upbringing of children. In *Euphues and his England*, Lyly gives advice on thrift and temperance in all the affairs of life. But he is obsessed, like

¹ See *Elementarie*.

² See *Positions*.

Ascham, with moral considerations, and he differentiates a scholar from a courtier. The latter is supposed to be intriguing, talkative, gay, wanton and pleasure-loving, and to have very little of that love of scholarship, which is a prominent mark of Castiglione's *gentleman*. His picture of Oxford, the English Athens, betrays Lyly's strict and intolerant moral sense: "Such playing at dice, such quaffing of drinke, such dalyaunce with woemen." His practical sense is as keen as his moral sense, and he never forgets the Tudor ideal that educated people should be pressed into the service of the State. His "trifolde kinde of lyfe" comprises active life (that of governors), speculative life (that of savants) and what is "moste commonlye a lewde life, an idle and vaine lyfe." It has been shrewdly remarked that Castiglione would not object to an idle life as absolutely profitless. Here is again brought out the distinction between English Humanism and the Italian Renaissance.¹ The former was to a certain extent based on utilitarian considerations, while the latter was divorced from them, and was inspired with the ideal of free and spontaneous development of man's mind and sensibility. Shakespeare inclined to the latter.

In England the discussion of the ideal of personal excellence in the sixteenth century received another impulse from a number of historical

¹ See *MPhil.*, Vol. 30, p. 152.

circumstances. Feudalism was now a spent force, and was slowly disappearing, while a new order of things was taking its place. This was the result of social and political reshuffling leading to the rise of the middle class. Feudalism contemplated only “two classes—the lords and their villeins”; but modern commerce, it has been said, requires “a middle class, and it requires an urban population.”¹ The rise of this class in England was itself partly due to the growth of English trade in wool² and wine in the fourteenth century. It was first noticeable in London, the trade centre, and was evidenced by the formation of corporate bodies like the Merchant Tailors’ Company, Haberdashers’ Company, the Company of Skinners, the Company of Drapers and the like. The superiority of the feudal aristocracy was now challenged. Privileges had been the monopoly of the nobles and the clergy in the feudal age, but Henry VIII’s autocracy curbed both the orders, and gradually led to the transfer of power and wealth from the aristocracy and of culture from the clergy to the middle class. Statutes passed in the reign of Henry VIII and Edward VI for the suppression of Chantry and the educational institutions connected with it, soon led to the secularisation of schools. Many were re-founded

¹ A. F. Pollard, *Factors in Modern History*, p. 41.

² R. H. Gretten, *The English Middle Class*, Ch. III.

by Henry himself. But merchants, supposed to belong to the middle class, also came forward to help the cause of education. The merchants of London created fifty educational endowments in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and those in the country many more.¹

Their object in endowing schools was to impart useful knowledge ; for they believed that their commercial prosperity and England's wealth depended on the spread of education which had a practical bearing. They wanted their children and apprentices to be better fitted for their work, and this was impossible unless they had some knowledge of science, mathematics, accountancy and Literature. Some were of opinion that education would help the cause of morality and religion by enabling young people to read the Bible.

Middle class people often sent their sons to Universities which were concerned not with useful knowledge, but with culture having no direct practical application. The ambition of these youths was to take orders or to join the bar and thus raise their social status. The bar and the Church offered prospects of brilliant careers to the deserving ; for successful lawyers and erudite clergymen, though of humble origin (like More, Cromwell and others), had been promoted in royal service over the heads of noblemen.

¹ Louis B. Wright, *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England*, pp. 50-60.

Well-to-do yeomen and merchants sometimes bought up the land of unthrifty noblemen, and social orders and hierarchies appeared to be in the melting-pot. This led to discussions on the essential qualifications and marks of nobility. English writers on the subject were indeed acquainted with classical, mediaeval and Renaissance views, but their work now revealed the emergence of an English ideal of social status and courtesy. *Generosity*,¹ *gentility* and *nobility* were at one time used synonymously, though it was felt that there was some difference of meaning.² All these three words had reference to the rank of those who stood above the "multitude" through the possession of special rights and privileges. John Selden thinks that *generosity* and *gentility* are connected with the Latin *generosus* and *gens*. *Gentile*, like *agnate*, meant the descendant of a freeman as distinguished from a slave. *Generous*, in Shakespeare,

¹ The following definition is given by Thomas Gainsford in the *Rich Cabinet* (1616): "*Generositie* doth not account him a gentleman, which is onely descended of noble bloud, in power great, in jewels rich, in furniture fine, in attendants brave: for all these are found in merchants and Jewes. But to be a perfect Gentleman, is to bee measured in his words, liberall in giving, sober in diet, honest in living, tender in pardoning and valiant in fighting." (Quoted in Mason's *Gentlefolk in the Making*, p. 128.)

² See Robert Glover, *Catalogue of Honour*, tr. Thomas Milles, London, 1610.

sometimes means *well-born*.¹ *Generosity* soon fell out of use (Selden thinks that *gentle* came to be used as an equivalent of *generous*), and up to the middle of the sixteenth century, *nobility* was the word commonly used to indicate the special position due either to descent or to the King's favour. Towards the end of the century *nobility* came to be restricted to the upper titled ranks only (from Barons upwards), and *gentility*, *gentle* and *gentry* indicated the ordinary distinction between high and low.² *Gentility* was thus distinguishable not only from *nobility*, but also from *commonalty*, on account of a supposed inner and inherited quality which the latter lacked. *Gentle*, however, continued to mean *well-born*, and the inner worth was an additional merit of the "gentle." According to Sitwell, the word *gentleman*, in the sense of one of a class (of people of good manners, etc.), did not come into use till 1413. Stubbs and Freeman are of a different opinion.³

¹ *Love's Labour's Lost*, V. i. 96.

² "Sixteenth-Century Definitions of the Gentleman in England" in *JEGPhil*, Vol. 24, p. 370.

³ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th Ed., p. 123.

But Sitwell has produced convincing proof of the correctness of his view. There were foreign wars in which the younger sons of English noblemen joined to seek their fortune after the ravages of the Black Death. They could not claim to be noblemen, as they did not inherit any title, and when they returned from the wars, they did not like to be classed as yeomen or franklins.

William Harrison divides the Elizabethan people “ into four sorts, as *gentlemen*, citizens or burgesses, yeomen and artificers or labourers. Of *gentlemen*, the first and chief (next to the King) be the prince, dukes, marquesses, earls, viscounts and barons, and these are called gentlemen of the greater sort, or lords and noblemen: and next unto them be knights, esquires, and, last of all, they that are simply called *gentlemen*. ”¹ Nobles were created by the King, but *gentlemen* were created by Heralds who granted them coat and arms. In course of time, the demand grew insistent that social status must depend not on birth or title, but on personal worth; and yeomen and burgesses who had merit and position, claimed coat and arms and the title of *gentleman*.² It was suggested that there was not, and could not possibly be, any physical difference between man and man. If ancestry were to be taken into

They sometimes called themselves *gentle men* (*i.e.*, men of noble birth), and this expression became interchangeable with *noblemen* in one sense. In 1413 an Act was passed requiring defendants in certain suits to state their position or degree. This facilitated the use of the word *gentleman* as signifying a rank in which moral worth and culture were to be expected (see the article on “ The English Gentleman ” by Sitwell in *The Ancestor*, No. 1, April, 1902).

¹ *A Description of England*, 1577, Bk. III, Ch. 4.

² E. Bolton in *The Cities Advocate* (1629) claims the title of *gentleman* even for an apprentice.

consideration, all must be regarded as equal, because all were descended from Adam and Eve. When it was urged that the noble deeds of ancestors spurred people on to good action,¹ the reply was that children of virtuous parents were in many cases vicious, and difference between man and man, if any, must be due to upbringing.² The Elizabethans, under the influence of the scholars of northern Europe, took a serious view of life's responsibilities, and regarded knowledge—useful as it was for commercial purposes—as essential to the cultivation of other virtues. Without it a man, even though he might try to practise virtue, was sure to fall into the snares of vice.³ Education therefore came to be recognised in course of time as a good claim to the title of *gentleman*. Says Sir Thomas Smith, “Whosoever studieth the lawes of the realme, who studieth in the Universities, who professeth liberal sciences, . . . can live idly and without manuell labour, and will beare the port, charge and countenance of a *gentleman*, he shall be called ‘master,’ for that is the title which men give to esquires and other *gentlemen*.”⁴

¹ See R. Mulcaster, *Positions*.

² See Guillaume de la Perrière, *The Mirror of Policy*, London, 1598.

³ See Pierre de la Primaudaye, *The French Academy*.

⁴ See Sir Thomas Smith, *The Commonwealth of England*, London, 1612, p. 28.

The importance attached to legal studies, which were popular amongst young men of noble families, evoked a protest from the “ martialists ” who thought that it was responsible for the decay of people’s fighting qualities. *The Boke of Noblesse*¹ (1475), which was addressed to King Edward IV, complained that “ lordis sonnes ” who had taken to the study of law and of “ civil matier,” commanded more respect than military men. Barnaby Riche, who was himself a military man, also protested against the partiality shown to lawyers and courtiers by the public. These protests had their effect, and it was agreed that meritorious public service should be recognised by promotion to the status² of *gentleman*, and that ten years’ service as officer in the army should suffice for the purpose. The question whether wealth constituted a claim to the status of *gentleman*, was discussed without any clear conclusion. It was pointed out that though the Stoics hated wealth, Aristotle commended the virtue of liberality which could not be practised without it, and even scholars recognised the importance

¹ Rap. Roxburghe Library.

² See Churchyard, *A General Rehearsal of Wars*, London, 1579. Harrison too thinks that “ service in the room of a Captain in the wars, or good Counsel given ” (to the Crown) at home, would be a good claim to coat and arms and to the title of *master* or the status of *gentleman*.

of this virtue.¹ A gentleman was expected to be suitably dressed,² and it was considered desirable that his house should be adorned with tapestry, paintings and engraved plate. When he walked out, he should be attended by servants.³

Elizabethan efforts to institute a regular system of education for young gentlemen in order to prepare them for public service, left their traces in Sir Humphrey Gilbert's *Queene Elizabethes Achademy*. It drew enormously on foreign sources. The recreations and exercises recommended in it—"skirmishinges, marchinges," riding, wielding the battle-axe, fencing, etc.,—were borrowed mostly from the classical and feudal ages. Its courses of study evinced contemporary interest in comprehensive intellectual culture. The science of fencing was considered noble by the Elizabethans—"to be preferred next to Divinitie; for as Divinitie preserveth the soule from hell and the devill, so doth this noble science defend the bodie from wounds and slaughter."⁴ In recommending horsemanship to the English

¹ See Lawrence Humphrey, *The Nobles*, Bk. I, London, 1563.

² See T. Elyot, *Governour*.

³ See *A Health to the Gentlemanly Profession of Serving-men*.

⁴ George Silver's *Paradoxes of Defence*. See also Vincentio Saviolo his *Practice*.

youth, Ascham said, " Of all outward qualities, to ride faire is most cumelie for himselfe, most necessarie for his contrey." ¹ The horse which was to be preferred by riders was known as the great horse as distinct from the palfrey, the courser, the nag, etc. Music and dancing were encouraged along with foreign travel, the educational importance of which was stressed by politicians as well as by teachers.

English writers defined courtesy as behaviour proper for a man. Says Lyly, " It is sober and discreet behaviour, civil and gentle demeanour." Honour is not inerely trustworthiness. One writer calls it the reward of virtue. Cleland says, " It is not in his hand who is honoured, but in the hearts and opinions of other men, who either have seen his merits, or heard of his renowne and good reputation." It is sometimes divided into natural (imperfect) and acquired (perfect). Natural honour means a " common opinion " that a man " has never failed in justice or valour, that he is good if he does not appear to the contrary." " Acquired honour is the reward of well-doing, and is perfect because it is positive and requires action." ² The laws of duelling were

¹ *The Scholemaster.*

² *The Courtier's Academie*, chapter on Honour.

based on considerations of honour, the duel being permitted only where honour was at stake.¹

Literature always bears the reflection of inspiring ideals. If, as is evident, a distinct ideal of life grew up in Elizabethan England under the influence of the Italian Renaissance, its impress may legitimately be expected in its literary products. As an example, reference may be made to Henry Medwall's interlude *Fulgens and Lucre*² written between 1490 and 1500 A.D. It is claimed that so far as dramatic technique is concerned, it betrays no foreign influence, but is an indigenous product. Its theme, however, is the relative importance of birth and culture (including learning and virtue) in the opinion of a young girl whose choice of a husband is to depend on her decision, and scholars have traced its source in *De Vera Nobilitate* by one Buonaccorso,³ an Italian humanist of the fifteenth century. This may be true; but the chief attraction of the story for the dramatist must have been due to contemporary interest in ideals of

¹ J. Burckhardt, *The Civilisation of the Period of the Renaissance in Italy*, tr. S. G. C. Middlemore, Part VI, Ch. I.

² *Fulgens and Lucre*, ed. Boas and Reed, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

³ Buonaccorso's dialogue had been translated into French, and Caxton published in 1481 an English translation of the French version by John Tiptoft.



personal worth suggested in it. In *Medwall*, the discussion of the qualifications of the young lovers is too obtrusive. Shakespeare, the master artist, is subtle, and manages to change his borrowings beyond recognition. Yet traces are discoverable of his interest in the new ideal of human personality which England was transplanting from Italy.

CHAPTER III

' NURTURE ' AND TABLE-COURTESY IN SHAKESPEARE

Though feudalism had disappeared from England when Shakespeare was born, its influence survived, and is noticeable in his plays. Carlyle went so far as to describe him as the poet of feudalism. He might have had no intention of ignoring the many-sided genius of the poet, but this remark may be misleading, for it overlooks the vast influence of the Renaissance on him. It has also to be noted that Shakespeare was attracted not so much by the external paraphernalia of feudalism as by its inner spirit which was the spirit of chivalry. This had re-fashioned ideals of life and conduct in England, and was yet a living force in Shakespeare's days when its externals had grown antiquated and had almost been discarded. " In the Middle Ages England borrowed chivalry from France ; but English chivalry and French chivalry developed differently. In France it was chiefly restricted to a class ; in England, almost from the first, it was democratized. In France, up to the Revolution, the etiquette of institutional chivalry grew increasingly important, until in the end it became largely a matter of formal politeness ; in England the *spirit of the ideal* was so continuously insisted upon that

it is now hardly separable from moral uprightness. In the one case, courtliness, refinement, elegance, careful consideration of conduct in the light of social authority, dominated its manifestation in daily life; in the other, frankness, sweetness, kindness, subordination of self in deference to religious principle, occasioned its sway.”¹ The subtle infiltration of these virtues into English life makes it all the more difficult to trace their influence in a writer like Shakespeare.

There are characters in his plays which are obviously inspired by chivalric ideals of manners, honour and courage. Talbot, Hotspur and Henry V are prominent examples. King Henry IV is charmed with the courage and pluck of Hotspur, and is envious that the Earl of Northumberland

“ Should be the father to so blest a son,
A son who is the theme of honour’s tongue;
Amongst a grove the very straightest plant;
Who is sweet Fortune’s minion and her pride—”²

In spite of his rashness and impatience, Hotspur is a fine specimen of manhood. Prince Hal says of his rival who for a time had cast a shadow on him, and who had just fallen under his sword :

“ . . . this earth that bears thee dead,
Bears not alive so stout a gentleman.”

¹ W. H. Schofield, *Chivalry in English Literature* p. 267.

² *1 Hen. IV*, I. i. 80-83.

According to Lady Percy,

“ in speech, in gait,
In diet, in affections of delight,
In military rules, humours of blood,
He was the mark and glass, copy and book,
That fashion’d others.”¹

The riotous early life of Henry V brings into greater relief his valour and sense of honour. His high courage at Harfleur and Agincourt can only be paralleled by his courtesy which makes him so popular. On the eve of the Battle of Agincourt

“ —forth he goes and visits all his host,
Bids them good morrow with a modest smile,
And calls them brothers, friends, and countrymen.”

Talbot, who dies with his son’s body in his arms, is another embodiment of chivalric virtue. Schofield has traced it in Shakespeare’s plays in some detail.² But the rules of nurture, discipline, etc., which were evolved in the feudal age, have also left their trace in Shakespeare’s works.

Shakespeare was certainly a voracious reader, but it is hardly possible that he should have studied the books on table manners, meals and conduct, except in rare cases. They are dry and uninteresting, while many of them, though now well-known, had not attained any contemporary popularity.

¹ 2 *Henry IV*, II. iii. 28-32.

² See *Chivalry in English Literature*, Lecture on Shakespeare.

Some were in Latin and hence uninviting, though they inspired popular books in English, as translations or imitations. But the precepts contained in them, traceable as they were to the institution of Feudalism, were actually followed in the households of noblemen and churchmen as well as lay peers, and in course of time they came to be followed by an increasingly large number of people, for those who had shaped their own habits and conduct in the light of these admonitions, naturally inculcated them upon their descendants. It is probable that traces of *courtesy*, such as they exist in Shakespeare's plays, are the effect, not of his studies but of his contact with the life of his age. He was in touch with the Earl of Southampton and possibly also with the Earl of Pembroke, and hence knew high life. He is also believed to have been a Groom of the Chamber in the reign of James I. Grooms of the Chamber had to do all sorts of work—to light the fire, cleanse and sweep the room, fetch and warm the clothes, make the bed and render other services of a similar nature. Whether Shakespeare, as "Groom of the Chamber of his Majesty," had to do any menial work, cannot be definitely ascertained. But he had certainly the opportunity of observing the practice that was followed.¹

¹ No document is available to prove Shakespeare's appointment as Groom. But this may be due to the fact that the Lord Chamberlain's Warrant-Books for

The domestic staff of feudal nobles consisted, besides pages, of men who could not very well be described as menial servants, though they had to do menial work at times. They possessed qualifications which were not to be expected in ordinary domestics. They were (1) "men of *witte, discretion, government, and good bringing up*, considering their sovereign's, lord's, and maister's serious *business, mightie affairs* and worldly wealth were for the most part committed to their custodie and care"; (2) "men of.....*courage, not fearing to fight* in the mayntenance of their maister's credite in his just quarrell....." (3) "men of strength and activitie to be excellent in shooting, *running, leaping, dauncing*.....or other feates of like facultie"; (4) "men fine, neate and minute in regarde of their nearness about their maister and his apparel, for the clowne and the sloven are as far unfit for this profession as Tarleton's toyces for Paules pulpit...." (5) "men of quality to be seen in *hawking, hunting, fyshing and fowling* with all such gentlemen's pastimes."¹

These men were really their master's companions—they mixed with him freely and intruded on his privacy. They were called *serving-men*,² but

1603-1628 were lost. See E. Law, *Shakespeare as a Groom of the Chamber*, p. 21.

¹ *A Health to the Gentlemanly Profession of Serving-men.*

² As will be seen later, this word also meant *servers*.

they had a sort of dignity, and led comfortable lives. With the disappearance of Feudalism, their lot grew hard. In *King Lear* there is an indication of their position in the King's conversation with Kent :

Lear. What dost thou profess ? What wouldst thou with us ?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem ; to serve him truly that will put me in *trust* ; to love him that is honest ; to *converse* with him that is wise, and says little ; to fear *judgment* ; to *fight* when I cannot choose.....

Lear. ...What wouldst thou ?

Kent. Service.....

Lear. What services canst thou do ?

Kent. I can *keep honest counsel, ride, run*, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly.....

Lear. How old art thou ?

Kent. ...I have years on my back forty-eight.¹

When Goneril protests against the behaviour of Lear's men, the King angrily replies :

My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That *all particulars of duty know*,
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name.

Men of the type here referred to, appear to have been different from noblemen's pages. Both seem to be referred to in a passage in *Merry*

¹ *King Lear*, I. iv.

Wives of Windsor. Slender tells Simple, “ Go, sirrah, for all you are my *man*, go wait upon my cousin Shallow. [Exit Simple.] A justice of peace some time may be beholding to his friend for a man. I keep but *three men* and a *boy* yet, till my mother be dead ; but what though? yet I live like a poor *gentleman* born.”¹ John Russell’s *Boke of Nurture* describes some of the specific duties of boys put in noblemen’s households. The author meets a youth in a forest, and asks “ with hoom that he wonned than.” On his replying that he is not in any nobleman’s service, the author gives him lessons in the duties of the pantry-man, the chamberlain, the butler and the carver. The duties of the chamberlain are set forth in detail by Russell in a separate chapter of his book. Making the bed for the lord and attending upon him are some of them,² and are referred to as such by Shakespeare. The “ Lord ” disguised as a servant says to the astonished Sly :

“ —wilt thou sleep ? We’ll *have thee to a couch*
Softer and sweeter than the lustful bed
On purpose trimm’d up for Semiramis.”³

The chamberlain had also to help his lord to dress in the morning. He came and knelt down before

¹ *Merry Wives of Windsor*, I. i. 265-69.

² John Russell, *Boke of Nurture*, ll. 920-25 and ll. 867-69.

³ *The Taming of the Shrew*, Ind. ii. 37-39.

him, and asked what sort of dress he would like to wear. Russell even suggests the language to be used by him on the occasion :

Syr, what Robe or gov'n pleseth it yow to
were today ? ¹

The basin or ewer full of water had to be kept ready for the lord to wash his hands in when necessary, and specially when he left the privy ² or finished his meal.³ In the first and second scenes of the Induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*, there is a reference to some of these duties in the Lord's instructions to his servants as to how they should deal with Sly "when he wakes" :

"Let one attend him with a silver *basin*
Full of rose-water, and bestrew'd with flowers ;
Another bear the *ewer*, the third a *diaper*,
And say, ' Will't please your lordship *cool your*
hands ? '

Some one be ready with a costly *suit*,
And ask him *what apparel he will wear.* " ⁴

When courting Bianca, Gremio tries to influence her father's choice in his favour, and declares :—

"—my house within the city
Is richly furnished with plate and gold :
Basins and ewers to lave her dainty hands—" ⁵

¹ *Boke of Nurture*, l. 904.

² *Boke of Nurture*, ll. 936-38.

³ F. Seager, *Schoole of Vertue*, ll. 410-12, EETSOS, 32.

⁴ Induction, i. 55-60.

⁵ *The Taming of the Shrew*, II. i. 339-41 (regarded as non-Shakespearean).

The Second Servant in the Induction says to the "transformed" drunkard Sly :—

" Will't please your mightiness to *wash your hands* ? "

Other servants promptly " present a *ewer, basin and napkin*."

The practice of washing the hands before meals was common and invited guests naturally took the opportunity for a wash. The picture of a guest washing before dinner, is reproduced in one edition of Russell's *Boke of Nurture* from an old MS. in Paris. *Stans Puer* thus lays down the rule on the matter :

" Ete thou not mete with thi un-wasche hondes,
For dred of mych hurte that may come ther-bye—" ¹

The same admonition is contained in the following lines :

" Pare clene thi nailis; thin *hondis waische* also
to-fore thi mete," ²

In Act IV, sc. i where Petruchio is pretending love and extreme regard for Katherina, he asks,

" Shall I have some water ?
Come, Kate, and *wash*, and welcome heartily."

As the Servant lets the ewer fall to the ground, Petruchio strikes him to the amazement of Katherina.

¹ *Stans Puer*, ll. 73-74, Ashmole MS, 61 EETSES, 8.

² *Stans Puer*, Lambeth MS. 853 ll. 22-23. See also Harl. MS. 2251.

It was the chamberlain's duty to keep the chamber ready before the lord retired for the night. Says Russell :—

‘ Looke that ye haue the *bason for chambur* and
also the *urnalle*

Redy at alle howres when he wiile clepe or calle.”¹

In the *First Part of King Henry the Fourth*, the Second Carrier is surprised to find that the salutary practice here referred to is not followed in the inn at Rochester, and points out the evils that ensue :—“ Why, they will allow us ne’er a *jordan*, and then we leak in the chimney ; and your chamber-lie breeds fleas like a loach.”²

The page had to receive the lord when he came back after a ride or from hunting, hold the stirrup, lead the horse away and take off the master's boots. A picture reproduced in Russell's *Boke of Nurture* from a mediaeval manuscript represents the page as taking off a knight's boots. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Petruchio shouts at the gate of his house, on his arrival just after his marriage,

“ What ! no man at door
To hold my stirrup nor to take my horse ? ”

A little later he asks his servants to remove his boots :

“ Off with my boots, you rogues ! you villains ! ”

¹ *Boke of Nurture*, ll. 971-72.

² ll. i. 20-22.

He next beats one of them on the pretext that he could not do the work properly.

Carving was an important part of table courtesy, and skill in it was a sign of good breeding. In commending the courtly finesse of the French lord Boyet, Berowne remarks in *Love's Labour's Lost* :

" He can *carve* too, and lisp : why, this is he
That kiss'd his hand away in courtesy." ¹

Russell gives elaborate rules of carving different kinds of meat, fish, etc. Wynkyn de Worde's *Boke of Keruyng* is important in this connection. Shakespeare's acquaintance with some of the technical terms is obvious. According to Wynkyn de Worde, the word specially applicable to the carving of deer is *break* (' breke ' is his spelling). Other words used to mean carving in the case of other kinds of meat, are also given in his work. *Break* means "to split up" the meat with the help of two fingers and the thumb only, and without the use of a knife. In *Love's Labour's Lost* Shakespeare uses this word in connection with *capon* which means a ' love-letter ' as well as a ' chicken.' Love-letters were generally folded so as to look like chickens.² When Berowne's letter to Rosaline is handed over to the Princess by Costard, she says :

" Boyet, you can *caroe* ;
Break up this *capon*." ³

¹ V. ii 324-25.

² See the note on *capon* in the New Variorum Edition.

³ *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. i. 54-55.

Carving is well-known to Boyet, the fashionable courtier, and he promptly replies in ambiguous language,

"I am bound to serve."

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Antony thus rebukes the Queen of Egypt when she permits Cæsar's messenger to kiss her hand:

"—you were a fragment
Of Cneius Pompey's—" ¹

Whiter thinks *broken meat* is the synonym ² of *fragment*. *Broken* in this phrase would obviously have the same meaning as it has in books on carving.

Carving of hens meant the plucking off of wings. "Furst, unlace the whynges," says Russell.³ "Capon or henne of grece, lyfte the legges, than the wynges," writes Wynkyn de Worde.⁴ Probably a new method was coming into vogue in Shakespeare's days, *viz.*, scalding the chicken with hot water, so that the skin with the feathers might come off easily. There is a reference to this in *Timon of Athens*:

All servants. Gramercies, good fool. How does
your mistress?

Fool. She's e'en setting on water to scald such
chickens as you are." ⁵

¹ III. xi. 117-18.

² See the note in the New Variorum Edition of the play.

³ *Boke of Nurture*, l. 410.

⁴ *Boke of Keruyng*.

⁵ II. ii. 68-71. See the note in Hudson's Edition of *Timon of Athens*. The quotation is possibly non-Shakespearean.

Chaucer alludes to the new method in his *Romaunt of the Rose* (l. 6820).

Some of the dishes recommended by Elizabethan writers on table manners, are referred to in Shakespeare's plays. The usual breakfast in many families in their days consisted of *eggs and butter*. *The Household Book of the Fifth Earl of Northumberland* shews that this was so at least in this Earl's family during Lent.¹ Puritans sneered at the practice as Popish. Falstaff opines that the Prince has not even as much 'grace' "as will serve to be prologue to an *egg and butter*."² The Chamberlain of the Rochester Inn informs Gadshill that the travellers "are up already and call for *eggs and butter*."³ *Beef and mustard* with the promise of which Grumio tantalises Katherina in *The Taming of the Shrew*,⁴ are mentioned in Russell's *Boke of Nurture*.⁵ *Oysters* of which Pistol seems to be so fond and which he wants to open with his sword, are commended by Russell as having the potency "your helthe to renewe,"⁶ and *vinegar* which Mistress Quickly would serve

¹ See the foot-note in O. Elton's Edition of *1 Henry IV*, and also the foot-note in Hudson's Edition.

² *1 Henry IV*, l. ii. 20-21.

³ *Ibid.* II. i. 62.

⁴ *IV*. iii. 23.

⁵ l. 533.

⁶ l. 822. For courses see *Courses of a Meal or Banquet* in EETSES, 8, p. 92. See also *The Merry Wives*, II. ii. 2-3.

with prawns is described as specially good sauce by Wynkyn de Worde. One whole section of the *Boke of Nurture* deals with the carving of *bake metes* which the wealthy Capulet wanted to provide at any cost for his aristocratic guests at the feast on the occasion of his daughter's proposed wedding.¹ *Dates* and *quinces* were believed to improve health, and Russell recommends “*dates in confite*,” and asks people to “*bygyn your mele*” with *quinces and peris*.² The Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* is therefore anxious to bring to the notice of her mistress that *dates* and *quinces* are wanted in the pastry.³ The efficacy of *dates* in pastry is also hinted at by Cressida when, in spite of Pandarus' praises of Troilus, she remarks about the latter: “*Ay, a minced man : and then to be baked with no date in the pie, for then the man's date's out.*”⁴ *Almonds* are often mentioned in courtesy books,⁵ and *marchpane* finds a place in the menu in *Romeo and Juliet*.⁶ Consumption of indigestible things is forbidden by Russell who gives a list of “*fumo-sitees*.” Meat in some forms is *fumose*, e.g., when it is fried, raw, ‘salt, sowre and sowse.’⁷ Petruchio

¹ *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. iv. 5-6.

² *Boke of Nurture*, ll. 825-26.

³ IV. iv. 2.

⁴ *Troilus and Cressida*, I. ii. 266-68.

⁵ See Russell's *Boke of Nurture*, l. 102. “*Creme of almondes*” is mentioned in l. 825 of the same work.

⁶ I. v. 9.

⁷ *Boke of Nurture*, l. 357-60.

thus complains about the mutton which he rejects :

“ —’twas *burnt* and *dried* away ;
And I expressly am forbid to touch it,
For it engenders choler, planteth anger—”

Service at table was very important from the view-point of etiquette, and elaborate formalities were laid down for it in courtesy books. Fruits were stored in the pantry and spicery, and meat dishes were prepared in the kitchen by the cook. The man responsible for service was called the *sewer* (from the Old French *asseoir*, to seat). When asked by him, the cook and the pantry-man prepared the dishes, while the surveyor brought them out of the kitchen and the pantry. He probably deposited them on the dresser, and the *sewer* next set them on the table for the master and his guests.¹ Food was eaten generally from square wooden plates called *trenchers* in which it was put on the table. In Shakespeare the *sewer* appears as the *serving-man* or as mere *servant*. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Petruchio’s show of anger against his servants in Act IV, sc. i, gives an idea of the system of cooking and service in the fifteenth century :

Pet. What’s this? mutton?

First Servant. Ay.

Pet. Who brought it?

First Servant. I.

Pet. ’Tis *burnt*; and so is all the meat.

What dogs are these ! Where is the rascal *cook*?

¹ See ‘Office of a Sewer’ in the *Boke of Nurture*, ll. 684-85.

How durst you, villains, bring it from the *dresser*,
And serve it thus to me that love it not?

[Throws the meat, etc., at them.

There, take it to you, *trenchers*, cups, and all.

In *Romeo and Juliet*, servingmen with napkins appear in the hall of Capulet in Act I, sc. v, and are angry with the 'boys, who had not yet cleared it of "the joint-stools," the "court-cupboard" and "the plate" on which they had served the meals, so as to make it ready for the dancers and the musicians who are waiting outside. Plates were brittle, and needed careful handling by servingmen who had also to see to it that they were not stolen.¹ In this very scene one of them shouts to another, "Look to the plate." Nares suggests that frequent changes of *trenchers* at the table were an indication of luxury and good manners. Potpan in sc. v had probably to remove these after every course, and hence the First Servingman exclaims with reference to him, "...he shift a *trencher*! he scrape a *trencher*!" In *The Household Book of the Earls of Northumberland*, the *trencher* is mentioned as the plate usually used by rich people.² Antony rebukes Cleopatra as

" a morsel, cold upon
Dead Cæsar's *trencher*." ³

¹ *Boke of Nurture*, l. 680.

² See the note on *trencher* in the New Variorum Edition of *Romeo and Juliet*.

³ *Antony and Cleopatra*, III. xi. 116-17.

When Timon drives the friends of his better days out of his house, in an outburst of disgust and indignation, he calls them *trencher-friends*.¹ The underlying idea is expressed, though in different language, in the words "His friend that *dips in the same dish*"² and in the following lines: "—the fellow that sits next him now, *parts bread with him*, and pledges the breath of him in a divided draught."³ An old adage is quoted in Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie* :

"As the old cocke crowes so doeth the chick :
A bad cooke that cannot his owne fingers lick."

This is what probably suggests the response of the servingman to Capulet's orders for the supply of "twenty cunning cooks"⁴ : "You shall have none ill, sir ; for I'll try if they can *lick their fingers*."⁵

The cupboard, the side-table and the chief table in the dining-hall were covered with "cloths folded" which were brought by the "boteler."⁶ Russell describes how a loaf should be cut into equal portions, a towel "two and a half yards long by

¹ *Timon of Athens*, III. vi. 100.

² *Ibid.*, III. ii. 69.

³ *Ibid.*, I. ii. 47-49. The scene may be non-Shakespearean.

⁴ See the foot-note in the New Variorum Edition of *Romeo and Juliet*.

⁵ *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. ii. 3-4.

⁶ Directions about service, etc., are given in detail in the pamphlet *Ffor to serve a lord*. See the section entitled "Of laying the cloth and setting out the Table."

the ends” should be folded in a special manner, the portions put in the middle of the folds “bottom to bottom” and a wrapper placed on the top, to be removed only in the presence of the master.¹ The pamphlet *Ffor to serve a lord* lays down: “Be it remembrid that evermore at the begynnyng of grace the covertour of brede shal be avoyded and take away.” It was the covered dishes that misled Timon’s friends to expect a sumptuous feast, when they were invited to his banqueting-hall for the last time.

Sec. Lord. All covered dishes!

First Lord. Royal cheer, I warrant you.

Third Lord. Doubt not that, if money and the season can yield it.²

The Marshal and the Usher knew accurately the rules of precedence, arranged the seats at the banquet accordingly and helped the guests to take their seats. Their duties are defined by Russell. According to the *Boke of Keruyng*, “The Marshall and the vssher muste knowe all the estates of the chyrche, and the hyghe estate of a kynge, with the blode royall.” The *Boke of Nurture* gives the order of precedence, beginning with the Pope and ending with the equals of the esquire. Wynkyn de Worde’s book and the anonymous pamphlet, *The Ordre of Goyng or Sittyng*, reproduce almost exactly the same order. An Archbishop and a Duke only

¹ *Boke of Nurture*, ll. 210-28.

² *Timon of Athens*, III. vi. 52-54.

might, if they so desired, dine alone. Obviously, an unmannerly person would be given a separate table, and would not be permitted to sit with others. Hence Timon says of Apemantus :

“ —yond man is ever angry.
Go, let him have a table by himself,
For he does neither affect company,
Nor is he fit for it, indeed.” ¹

Either the host or the guest of honour is called the “ chief person ” and “ principall soverain ” in the pamphlet *Ffor to serve a lord*, and he had a prominent seat. Lennox refers to this when in the famous banquet-scene he tells Macbeth : “ Here is a place reserv’d, sir.” ²

There is a reference to the order of precedence in the few words of welcome with which Macbeth receives his guests :

“ You know your *own degrees* ; sit down ; at first and
last,
The hearty welcome ” ³

Lady Macbeth (now the Queen) also refers to the same thing when she asks the guests to leave the hall, on the ground that Macbeth is unwell :

“ At once, good night :
Stand not upon *the order of your going*,
But go at once.” ⁴

¹ *Timon of Athens*, I. ii. 29-32.

² *Macbeth*, III. iv. 47. See also *A Book of Precedence* in EETS, 8.

³ *Macbeth*, III. iv. 1-2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, III. iv. 118-20.

When he meets his false friends for the last time in his banqueting-room, Timon says: "Each man to his stool.....your diet shall be in all places alike. Make not a city feast of it, to let the meat cool ere we can agree upon the *first place*: sit, sit."¹ In the last line there is a clear reference to the order of precedence usually observed at formal banquets. There were rules governing even the formation of the funeral procession. An order for such a procession is laid down in the pamphlet *A Funeral in Popish Times*, and directions about the last rites are given in this and in another pamphlet entitled *The Ordering of a Funerall for a Noble Person in Hen. 7 time*.² The description of the procession following the coffin of Ophelia, as given in the First Quarto of *Hamlet*, is different from that given in the Second Quarto. The latter, consists of these few words only: "Enter K., Q., Laertes and the Corse." The former reads as follows: "Enter King and Queene, Laertes, and other lordes, with a Priest after the coffin." The order of procession in the First Folio, like that in the Second Quarto, omits the priest, but in the modern text it is similar to that in the first pamphlet mentioned above, and gives the first place to priests while the corpse is followed by the mourners, 'King, Queen, their Trains, etc.'

Names of some of the wines mentioned in *The Booke of Nurture* are found in Shakespeare.

¹ *Timon of Athens*, III. vi. 69-72.

² They are both published in EETSES, 8.

The sweet wines *bastard*¹ and *malevesyn*² are cases in point. *Metheglin* and *wort* were the names of wines prepared from herbs. They were the favourite drinks in Elizabethan times, and are mentioned in other works besides Russell's. Shakespeare refers to them³ as well as to *sack*⁴ and *ale*.⁵

There are also rules of conduct in courtesy books, unconnected with table manners. Some of them relate to the behaviour of the servant. *Stans Puer ad Mensam*, *Babees Book*, the *Boke of Nurture*, etc., contain almost identical rules about his speech, movement, etc. A few of them have apparently succeeded in leaving their traces in the plays of Shakespeare. It is improper for a servant to stare⁶ about or to laugh wantonly in the presence of his master.⁷ The haughty and ill-tempered Lear has always been accustomed to absolute humility on the part of his courtiers and servants. He cannot therefore bear

¹ Called *brown bastard* in *1 Hen. IV*, II. iv. 74, and *brown and white bastard* in *Measure for Measure*, III. ii. 3-4. See *Boke of Nurture*, ll. 119-20.

² Changed into *malmsey*, as in " *malmsey-nose knave* " in *2 Hen. IV*, II. i. 39.

³ *Love's Labour's Lost*, V. ii. 233. See *Boke of Nurture*, l. 992 and Notes, p. 223.

⁴ *The Taming of the Shrew*, Ind. ii. 2 and *Twelfth Night*, II. iii. 193.

⁵ *The Taming of the Shrew*, Ind. ii. 1.

⁶ *Babees Book*, ll. 68-69 ; *Stans Puer*, l. 8.

⁷ *Stans Puer*, l. 20 : *Babees Book*, l. 94.

the insolence of Oswald when he protests against his abusive words and stares him full in the face. Unable to suppress his anger, he roars :

"Do you *bandy looks* with me, you rascal?"¹

[Striking him.

The disguised Kent promptly punishes Oswald, and says : "Come, sir, arise, away ! I'll teach you *differences*."² In Act II, sc. ii, Kent himself is extremely irritated by the smiles of Oswald, and snaps : "*Smile* you my speeches, as I were a fool !" He had given provocation to the man, and retaliation by him is only natural. It may have taken the form of a derisive smile at the anger and impatience betrayed by Kent. But it has also to be noted that, though in disguise, the Earl has not been able to forget that smiling is improper on the part of a servant in his presence. In *Twelfth-Night* Malvolio's smiles give similar offence to Olivia.³

Some of the books on manners were intended not for noblemen's pages, but for young children in ordinary families. They contain simple admonitions, concrete and straightforward, without any intellectual subtlety, on matters affecting everyday life. Domestic economy, respect for superiors, friendship for equals, marriage, household duties, etc., form their subject-matter. Apart from shrewd

¹ *King Lear*, I. iv. 83.

² *Ibid.*, I. iv. 88-89.

³ *Twelfth-Night*, III. iv. 19-20.

observations on life and profound remarks on character, there is in Shakespeare's plays a large mass of homely instruction the insertion of which is not always prompted by dramatic necessity. Part of Polonius's advice to Laertes was put within quotation-marks in the First Quarto of *Hamlet*, which were deleted from the Second. Shakespeare's intention might very well have been to suggest that the wiseacre was merely reproducing what might be called copy-book maxims—platitudes already familiar to people as common sayings or teachings of conduct-books. The instruction contained in the following passage has no connection with the trend of the story, but its banality fits in with the character of Polonius :

" The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel ;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade." ¹

It may be paralleled by these lines from *The Good Wyfe Wold a Pylgremage* :—

" Change not thy frend all day
for no feyre speche ;
A trusty frende ys good I-fonde,
who-so may hyme reche,
Yefe anny fortun fall amysse,
then mey he be thy leche ;
Yefe he fynde the in anny wronge,
then meyst thou wyne his wreche." ²

¹ *Hamlet*, l. iii. 62-65.

² EETSES, 8, p. 42.

It may also be compared with this extract from *Certain Precepts*: "Be not.....too deare to thy Friend, or thy Friend too cheape to thee."

Another piece of advice given by Polonius to Laertes—

"Neither a borrower, nor a lender be ;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,"—¹

may be paralleled by the following :

"Borow thou not, if that thou meye,
For drede thi neybour wyll sey naye;
Ne take thou nought to fyrste,
Bot thou be lnne more bryste." ²

Mothers in olden times were the instructresses of their young daughters, and they sometimes frankly warned them against dangers which youth invites. The mother in one old poem tells the daughter :

"Alle the men be not trew
That fare speche to thee can schew.
For no couetys, no giftys thou take;
Bot thou wyte why, sone them forsake;
For gode women, with gyftes
Me ther honour fro them lyftes,
Those that thei wer All trew
As Any stele that bereth hew—" ³

¹ *Hamlet*, I. iii. 75-76. These lines do not occur in Q. 1.

² *How the Goode Wyfe taught hyr Doughter*, EETSES, 8, p. 50. See also EETSOS, 32, p. 45, l. 181.

³ *How the Goode Wyfe taught hyr Doughter*, EETSES, 8, p. 47. See also *How the Good Wijf taughte hir Doughtir*, EETSOS, 32, pp. 36-47.

The first two lines of this passage read very much like Laertes’ advice to Ophelia :

“ For Hamlet, and the trifling of *his* favour,
Hold it a *fashion* and a *toy* in blood.—”¹

The same advice is repeated later in different language :

“ —if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so *far* to *believe* it
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed.—”²

The note of warning sounded in the concluding lines of the last extract from *How the Goode Wyfe taught hyr Doughter*, resembles that in Polonius’s speech to Ophelia :

“ Admit no messengers, *receive no tokens*. ”³

It was in pursuance of her father’s admonition that Ophelia returned to Hamlet the tokens she had already received.

Polonius’s advice to his son—“ Give thy thoughts no tongue ”—is the same as that of another wiseacre to his :

“ And, son, *thi tonge thou kepe Al-so*,
And tell not all thynges that thou maye,
For *thi tonge* may be thy fo—”⁴

¹ *Hamlet*, I. iii. 5-6. ² *Hamlet*, I. iii. 24-27. ³ II. ii. 144.

⁴ *How a Wyse Man taught hys Sone*, EETSES, 8, p. 53. See also *How the Wise Man Taught his Son*, EETSOS, 32, p. 49.

The admonitions of Lear's Fool are in the same strain :

“ Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
 Lend less than thou owest, etc.

These also resemble closely some passages in *Warnings and Counsels for Noblemen*,¹ in which people are warned not to express all they think, show all they have and say all they know.

Later books of advice cover almost the same ground, and are inspired by the same spirit. Nicholas Breton's manual of letter-writing, *A Poste with a Madde Packet of Letters* (1602), his verse piece, *The Mothers Blessing* (1602), William Martyn's *Youths Instruction* (1612) and other works deal with the same topics—choice of friends, snare of the beauty of wanton girls, gambling, drinking, etc.

In matters of dress, Polonius did not want Laertes to be inexpensive, but only expressed himself against gaudiness :

“ Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
 But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:”

A tract entitled *How to rule one's Self and one's House* lays down a stricter rule in this matter : “ In Apparell, neyther curious nor costly.”²

¹ EETSES, 8, pp. 74-76.

² EETSES, 8, p. 71.

Sir Walter Raleigh thinks that Polonius might have taken his cue from the remarks on dress in Bk. I of Hoby's *Courtier*. *Certain Precepts* by Burleigh, the supposed original of Polonius, suggests that apparel should be decent, but not showy. *Instructions to his Sonne and to Posteritie* (attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh, though printed in 1632) has this sentence: "Exceed not in the Humour of Rags and Bravery.....no man is esteemed for gay Garments, but by Fools and Women."¹

¹ Quoted in *Gentlefolk in the Making*, pp. 63-64. Castiglione remarks: "Truth it is, that I would love it (*i.e.*, the dress) better, if it were not extreme in any part..... Moreover I will holde alwaies with it, if it bee rather somewhat *grave and auncient* than *garish*. Therefore me thinke a blacke colour hath a better grace in garments than any other, and though not thoroughly blacke, yet somewhat darke." (*The Courtier*, Bk II.)

Women's toilet too attracted the notice of writers. "In 1602 appeared Sir Hugh Platt's *Delightes for Ladies*, a treatise on cosmetics, which gives recipes for the care and treatment of the face, hair... and so forth, and includes directions for various sorts of perfume." (*Gentlefolk in the Making*, p. 118.) But vanity of this kind was denounced by many. For example, Thomas Tuke wrote *A Discourse against Painting and Tincturing Men and Women*. William Prynne, the author of the *Histriomastix*, also wrote a treatise against "love-lockes" and face-painting. Hamlet's denunciation of women's fashions and vanities in his outburst against Ophelia (III. i. 144-47) and particularly of painting (V. i. 200), thus follows one particular trend of contemporary opinion.

CHAPTER IV

RENAISSANCE COURTESY IN SHAKESPEARE

Taine says that Elizabethan drama was a reproduction of "les laideurs, les bassesses, les horreurs, les details crus, les mœurs déréglées et féroces." Even when allowances have been made for the nicety of French literary taste and judgment, this view will be found to be exaggerated, and, at the same time, one-sided. "Horror" and "cruelty" may be glaring in the Senecan type of English tragedy and also in plays influenced by it. But even these do not reflect merely the ferocity of "les bêtes sauvages"; for even in them there is what has been called sententious wisdom. Slovenly manners might be noticeable in the early English comedies, but there is also in them a homeliness which marked unsophisticated Elizabethan life not yet affected by continental culture. Both tragedy and comedy, however, passed through the early stages to a maturity in which their original defects disappeared. In Marlowe tragedy was no longer mere bloodshed and horror. Lyly, Peele, and Greene represent stages of development of English comedy from rude farce to a refined, varied and poetical form of entertainment. In Shakespeare, in whom Elizabethan drama reaches its perfection, there is undoubtedly intense tragic

gloom, but this is not identical with horror or bloodshed, as his mirth does not consist of a mere display of bad manners or lapse from taste. It may very well be urged that the highest ideals of life and conduct have been the informing spirit in Shakespeare's dramas and have redeemed his tragedies from being a mere exhibition of blood-lust and abnormal cruelty, and his comedies from vulgarity and buffoonery. This is partly due to the influence of the Renaissance ideal of courtesy which profoundly affected English thought, and partly to the finely-attuned taste and judgment of the great dramatist himself. He could not apparently conceive of diabolical passion otherwise than as a misfit in the scheme of things in this world. The *gentle* Shakespeare conceived of mirth as the welling up of a healthy and happy soul into witty speech. This normality of Shakespeare, as explained by Herford,¹ is an extraordinary phenomenon, and lies at the root of the real greatness of his work. It seems to mark him off from (1) those Elizabethans who came under the influence of Machiavelli and were obsessed with his ideal of *virtú*, and (2) also those who were attracted by licentiousness and vice as depicted in Italian novels and in the plays of Aretino, e.g., dramatists like

¹ C. H. Herford, *Shakespeare's Treatment of Love and Marriage and Other Essays*, Ch. I.

Webster, Tourneur, Ford and others. Undoubtedly Shakespeare came for a while under the spell of Machiavelli and Aretino,¹ but he was robust and healthy enough to shake it off easily. He also felt the attraction of Italian novels, but at his magic touch the dross was transformed into gold—stories of vice were made into great works of art.

It is significant that traces of Renaissance courtesy are clearer in those dramas that have an Italian atmosphere, or borrow their plots directly or indirectly from Italian sources. They may all be classified as Shakespeare's Italian plays. Some critics (e.g., Professor Boas) would put only *The Merchant of Venice* and *Romeo and Juliet* in this category. But there are also good reasons for including in it *Twelfth Night*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *As You Like It*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Love's Labour's Lost*. If Shakespeare was inspired with a patriotic zeal in his English historical plays, and with the greatness and the virtues of ancient Rome in his Roman plays, it is not unlikely that he should have had in view the courtesy and culture of Renaissance Italy in his Italian plays. Of course, they have also left their mark on *Hamlet* and a few other tragedies.

¹ For Shakespeare's knowledge of Aretino, see *MLR*, Vol. 25, p. 415.

Probably the Renaissance ideal of personal excellence assumed prominence in Shakespeare in proportion as the chivalric and feudal ideal receded to the background. The change in the meaning of the word *gentleman* in his works illustrates this. In *King John*,¹ when the Bastard describes himself as a *gentleman*, he claims only noble ancestry. Nothing more is meant by the word in plays like *Richard III*² and *Henry V*.³ Later the status of *gentleman* definitely signifies, as an additional merit, possession of culture which, in the Italian plays, includes social virtues and powers of conversation.

In the opinion of some Shakespeare suffers in comparison with Beaumont and Fletcher, so far as the painting of courtly life is concerned. Dryden said of these two: "They understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much better." William Cartwright, a fellow poet and dramatist, wrote of Fletcher, "Shakespeare to thee was dull." The explanation is probably to be found in the fact that the twin dramatists excelled in depicting court fashions and etiquette which Shakespeare would have regarded as finical or frivolous and as the object of ridicule. In Fletcher's days the manners and the morality of the English Court were divorced from national life which had been stirred by the Renaissance and which had

¹ I. i. 50.

² I. iii. 72.

³ IV. i. 42; IV. iii. 64.

inspired Shakespeare's work. They had latterly become the monopoly of a coterie, and degenerated in consequence. Beaumont and Fletcher reproduced the flippant talk of the Court and reflected its shallow manners, and were therefore applauded mostly by those for whom Shakespearean drama was too deep.

The question of Shakespeare's debt to the *Cortegiano* has engaged the attention of scholars. It is not really the same as his assimilation of the ideal of courtesy. Undoubtedly the *Cortegiano* was the best known handbook of Italian courtesy in the sixteenth century. Yet the discovery of a few of its phrases, turns of thought or humorous stories in the plays of Shakespeare, would not necessarily establish his obligation to the Renaissance ideal of life and manners which inspired it. Sir Walter Raleigh points out some examples of apparent verbal borrowing from it by Shakespeare. For example, he refers to the reflections on music in his plays, Polonius's advice to Laertes on dress and the allusion to the 'farmer, that hanged himself on th' expectation of plenty' in the Porter's speech in *Macbeth*, and traces all these to *The Courtier*. But he is silent on the question of the influence of its comprehensive ideal on the dramatist, though he finds in it the beginning of the wit-combats of the Elizabethan comedy. This obligation may, however, be regarded as an influence of courtesy literature if a proper case be made out for

the view. Sir Edward Sullivan has likewise pointed out a number of passages in Pettie's English version of Guazzo's *La Civile Conversazione*, which read like sentences from the plays of Shakespeare.¹ The passages are scattered over the different chapters of Guazzo's book, and are by no means striking, and it is difficult to suggest positively that Shakespeare borrowed them. Even if he did, it has still to be established on relevant evidence that he was influenced by the spirit and the message of the work as a whole, apart from its stray phrases.

An attempt has been made in the following pages to establish Shakespeare's obligation to the ideal of courtesy on evidence supplied by the atmosphere of his plays and his characterisation of important *dramatis personæ*. Comparison of a play with its source has been made in order to bring these into clear relief by sifting his own contribution from borrowed material.

A. *Love's Labour's Lost*

The story of *Love's Labour's Lost* may be summed up as the transformation of confirmed bachelors into ardent lovers. This slight plot is laid over with other matters which have suggested different interpretations of the meaning of the play. Don Adriano

¹ "An Italian Book of Etiquette in Shakespeare's days" in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, June, 1913. See also *The Nineteenth Century and After*, February, 1904.

de Armado's mannerism of speech is taken to be marked by the *alto estilo* of Guevara, which had attracted notice in England in Shakespeare's days, while Holofernes is regarded as an impersonation of pedantry. Some of Berowne's speeches read like a parody of Lyly's Euphuism. It has therefore been remarked that “the purport of the play is to satirize certain affectations of manner and of speech.” Again, the prompt violation of the monastic vow by which the scholars in the Academy bound themselves not to take more than one meal a day, “to sleep but three hours in the night,” “not be seen to wink of all the day,” and “not to see a woman,” has been taken to indicate Shakespeare's censure of the ascetic ideal. Whatever the value of these interpretations of the play, one must not ignore its atmosphere and the conception of some of its characters, which reveal the influence of Renaissance courtesy.

The protagonists are the members of the court of Navarre, and its King is devoted to culture which he tries to promote with their help, so that

“Navarre shall be the wonder of the world.”¹

The insistence on intellectual pursuit as distinct from asceticism is here clear. Ferdinand says: “Our court shall be a little *academe*,”² and describes his

¹ I. i. 12.

² *Academe* in the play suggests reference to the Elizabethan desire for education in suitable institutions.

courtiers as *fellow-scholars*. Social life, too, which is sought to be stifled at the beginning of the play, appears with all its charm towards the end—with witty conversation, love-making, music and dancing. Youth and life here try to find expression in speech. The background is almost the same in the *Cortegiano*. In Urbin, Duke Fridericke had built a stately palace decorated with rich hangings, paintings, marble statues and musical instruments of all kinds, and had “gathered together a great number of most excellent and *rare books in Greeke, Latin and Hebrue*.....esteeming this to be the chiefest ornament of his great palace.” After him Guidubaldo “set his delight above all thinges to have his house furnished with most *noble and valiant gentlemen*, with whom hee lived verie familiarly, *enjoying their conversation*.¹ Wherein the pleasure which hee gave unto other men, was no lesse than that he received of other, because hee was verie *well seene in both toongs*, and together with a *loving behaviour and pleasantnesse*, he had also accompanied the *knowledge* of infinite things.....And I beleeve it was never so tasted in other place, what manner a thing the *sweet conversation* is that is occasioned of an *amiable and loving company*, as it was once there....Where

as reflected in Sir Humphrey Gilbert's book *Queen Elizabethes Achademy*.

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

among other recreations, *musicke and dauncing....* sometime they propounded *feate questions*, other-while they invented certayne *wittye sportes and pastimes.*"¹

If he read *The Courtier*, this portrait of the court of Urbin was only too likely to captivate Shakespeare's imagination. The likelihood becomes almost a certainty when the historical event, which is regarded as the source of the slender plot of *Love's Labour's Lost*, is taken into consideration. On the authority of a French writer, Sidney Lee narrates: "At the end of the year 1586, a very decided attempt had been made to settle the disputes between Navarre and the reigning King (of France). The mediator was a Princess of France—Catherine de Medici—who had virtually ruled France for nearly thirty years,² and who now acted in behalf of her son, decrepit in mind and body, in much the same way as the Princess in *Love's Labour's Lost* represents her decrepit, sick and bed-ridden father. The historical meeting was a very brilliant one. The most beautiful ladies of the court accompanied their mistress.....Henry (King of Navarre) was

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

² See the New Variorum Edition of *Love's Labour's Lost*, Appendix, p. 346. Hunter refers to another event in the history of the relations between France and Navarre as a possible source of the plot of this play. It is described in the *Chronicles* of Monstrelet. See p. 342 of the Appendix.

desirous of marrying one of them. Navarre, however, parted with Catherine and her sirens without bringing their negotiations to a satisfactory decision." Biron and Longaville were the names of two of the supporters of the King of Navarre, while the Duke of Mayenne, whose title suggested the name of Dumaine, was a reputed French general. This event, which created a sensation in Europe, was only a feudal pageant, marked by splash of colour and glitter of steel. The outer framework of Shakespeare's play is indeed suggested by it. But its atmosphere of culture and its brilliant social life are the product of the author's undoubted love of Italianism of the Renaissance.

An analysis of the characters of the protagonists will further illustrate this. There are three young courtiers of *noble blood* in *Love's Labour's Lost*, but none is a mere specimen of feudal nobility. Longaville is thus described :

" A man of *sovereign parts* he is esteem'd,
Well fitted in the *arts*, glorious in *arms* :
Nothing becomes him ill that he would well."

The young Dumaine, an attractive youth, is loved for his *virtue*, and has also "*shape to win grace though he had no wit.*" Berowne (or Biron) is the merriest and most intelligent man, and the most brilliant conversationalist that Rosaline has ever met.

" His eye begets occasion for his *wit* ;
For every object that the one doth catch,

The other turns to a *mirth-moving jest*,
Which his *fair tongue, conceit's expositor*,
Delivers in such *apt and gracious words*
That aged ears play truant at his tales,
And younger hearings are quite ravished ;
So *sweet and voluble is his discourse.*" ¹

The attributes of all the three are those of the Italian courtier. Castiglione stresses the importance, among other qualities, of physical grace as well as of charm of conversation. The courtier, says he, “shall never want good communication and fitte for them hee talketh withall, and have a good understanding with a certaine *sweetnesse* to refresh the hearers' minds, and with *merry conceites and jestes to provoke them to solace and laughter*, so that without being at any time loathsome or satiate, he may *evermore delite.*” ²

Berowne is the most attractive figure. He it is that raises a protest against compulsory seclusion and asceticism, though he consents to devote himself to study in the Academy. But he is overruled. His personality, bubbling with mirth and vitality, is not apparently meant for monastic rigidity. The Princess of France and the Ladies

¹ *Love's Labour's Lost*, II. i. 69-76.

² *The Courtier*, Bk. II. *Il Galateo* explains grace in manners and speech as understood in Renaissance Italy. Della Casa says : “It is not enough for a man to do things that be good, but he must also have a care, he do them with a good grace.” (Tr. R. Peterson, 1576.)

attending upon her possess most of the attributes of Castiglione's lady of the court. Rosaline is almost Berowne's compeer in wit,¹ and her tongue is sharp. This comes out in Act II, sc. i, which reproduces the atmosphere in which lay the source of Italian courtesy of the Renaissance. Here is an illustrative dialogue :

Berowne—Did not I dance with you in Brabant once ?

Rosaline—Did not I dance with you in Brabant once ?

Ber.—I know you did.

Ros.—How needless was it then

To ask the question !

Ber.—You must not be so *quick*.

Ros.—'Tis 'long of you that *spur me* with such questions.

Ber.—Your *wit's too hot*, it speeds too fast, 'twill tire.

Ros.—Not till it *leave the rider in the mire*.

The "civil war of wits" between the pair in Act II, sc. i shows the similarity of their temperament

¹ Appreciation of wit in Elizabethan England was keen, and was influenced by Italian example to a certain extent. Lyly's remark in *Euphues and his England* is interesting, and probably reflects a trend of contemporary opinion: "Their (*i.e.*, English people's) civility not inferior to those that deserve best, their *wittes very sharp and quick*, although I have heard that the *Italian* and the French-man have accompted them but gross and dull-pated."

and character, which forms the bond of mutual attraction. It is this consonance of spirit that converts Berowne from “love’s whip”¹ into a fervent lover.

Rosaline, along with some of the other characters in the play, has a strong will—“that dominant note of the Renaissance; the individualism which... finds full expression in *The Courtier*.”² When Berowne breaks the vow, and offers to marry her, she directs him to undergo expiation by spending a year in a hospital.

Shakespeare was in his dramatic nonage when he wrote *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. His art had not yet attained maturity. The dialogue was crude humour far from sparkling and conception of personality superficial. But it is easy to discern here the seed which later grew up into the full-blossomed tree.

B. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

This play has been placed between 1590 and 1595. On the ground of versification which differs in some parts of it from that of certain other parts, some are inclined to think that it was originally written in 1590 and revised in 1595. Though it was first printed in the

¹ III. i. 176.

² Sir Walter Raleigh, Introduction to *The Courtier*

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Folio of 1623, it is certainly one of the early comedies, whatever might be the exact date of composition. Its source has been traced to the story of Felix and Felismena in the Spanish romance, the *Diana Enamorada*, by the Portuguese Jorge de Montemayor. Though the English translation of the *Diana* by Bartholomew Yonge was published in 1598, it had been finished earlier—about 1582—and had been in circulation in manuscript even before publication. Shakespeare might have seen a manuscript copy, or read a French version of the Spanish romance by N. Collin, which appeared in 1578, and there are points of resemblance between Shakespeare's story and that in the *Diana*. The play mentioned in the Revels Accounts of 1584-85 as *The History of Felix and Philomena* was written by some predecessor of Shakespeare, and, if ever printed, has been lost. Probably it did not differ much from Yonge's version. Slighter debts of Shakespeare in *The Two Gentlemen* were due to Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet* (1562), Sidney's *Arcadia* and Lyly's *Euphues*. But the Spanish story must be looked upon as its chief source. A comparison of the two is therefore likely to bring out Shakespeare's own contribution. This play is said to have brought Italy first into Shakespeare's comedies. Love and friendship really form its subject-matter, and both were idealised during the Renaissance.

An examination of some of the characters will reveal the influence of the more comprehensive Renaissance virtue of courtesy, of which there are no traces in the Spanish story. The transmuting power of Shakespeare's genius developed with his age, and his borrowings are likely to be clearly discernible in his early work.

Castiglione mentions "comely shape of person and countenance," "nobleness of birth," moral courage, moderate *wealth* and "a good grace, especially in speaking,"¹ as the qualifications of a courtier, and Shakespeare attributes one or more of these to each of the protagonists of the play. Valentine and Proteus are both described as gentlemen, i.e., men of noble birth. Proteus's gentle blood is set in relief against the other virtues of some of the remaining wooers of Julia.² Sir Eglamour is "fair," "well-spoken, neat and fine," while Mercatio is "rich." Thurio is the foolish rival of Valentine for the hand of Silvia, and he is proud of his *accomplishments* and social status. Act V, sc. ii contains an analysis of his qualifications by himself, and this shows distinctly the influence of the ideal of courtesy. Thurio asks: "What says she (Silvia) to my *face*?", "How likes she my *discourse*?", "What says she to my *valour*?", "What says she to my *birth*?", "Considers she my *possessions*?", etc. Undoubtedly what Thurio means by *discourse* is

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

² I. ii.

eloquence or facility of speech as explained by Castiglione. As for riches, though the *Cortegiano* does not make much of them, some courtesy books do. For example, in *Il Nennio* one of the speakers regards them as essential.

The court was the training-ground for gentlemen, or courtiers. While Antonio is wondering how his son Proteus could "be a perfect man,"¹ Panthino draws his attention to the fact that

"—his companion, youthful Valentine,
Attends the emperor in his *royal court*,"²

and suggests that Proteus too should be sent there. He says :

"There shall he practise *tilts* and *tournaments*,
Hear sweet *discourse*, converse with noblemen,
And be in eye of every *exercise*
Worthy his youth and *nobleness of birth*."³

Felix who is the counterpart of Proteus has only the attributes of a mediaeval knight. He expresses his love to Felismena "by sundrie signes, as by tylt and tourneyes, and by prauncing up and downe upon his proude jennet" before her window. His father indeed sends him to a royal court, lest he "should spende his youth idly at]home, where

¹ I. iii. 20.

² I. iii. 26-27.

³ I. iii. 30-33.

nothing could be learned but examples of vice whereof the verie same idleness was the onely mistresse." But he remains there only "*about certaine affaires of his fathers and his owne.*"¹ All-round excellence including intellectual and physical culture, as implied in the speech² of Panthino, is not the aim of Felix. Antonio would like his son to be 'a perfect man,' but this ideal is not to be thought of in connection with Felix.

The reference by Panthino to "studious universities" as the desirable resort of the youth,³ is clearly indicative of the spirit of the Renaissance in Shakespeare's play. Castiglione "blamed the Frenchmen themselves that their mindes were so far wide from this profession (*i.e., letters*), especially having at their doores so noble an *universitie* as Paris is, where all the world resorteth."⁴ Actually Proteus was devoted to studies which were disturbed only by his love for Julia. He says:

"Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphos'd me;—
Made me neglect my *studies*—" ⁵

¹ "The Story of The Shepherdess Felismena" from the *Diana Enamorada* of Montemayor, tr. B. Yonge, 1598. See J. P. Collier, *Shakespeare Library*, Vol. II.

² *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I. iii. 30-32.

³ *Ibid.*, I. iii. 10.

⁴ *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

⁵ I. i. 66-67.

But Felix has obviously no intellectual craving. Valentine's description of Proteus¹ makes him out to be a cultured youth and a fine specimen of courtesy :

" He is complete in *feature* and in *mind*
With all good *grace* to grace a *gentleman*." ²

The Duke is amazed when he hears it, and is unable to conceal his satisfaction at the prospect of having such a brilliant gentleman as his courtier :

" Beshrew me, sir, but if he make this good,
He is as worthy for an empress' love
As meet to be an emperor's *counsellor*." ³

Valentine too has the marks of the Renaissance *gentleman*, and, curiously enough, they first come out in the speeches of the outlaws in Act IV, sc. i. One thinks "he is a *proper* man," another asks, "Have you the *tongues* ?",⁴ while a third tells him,

"—you are *beautified*
With *goodly shape*, and by your own report
A *linguist*, and a man of such *perfection*
As we do in our quality much want—" ⁵

¹ *The Two Gentlemen*, II. iv. 74-75.

² *Ibid.*, II. iv. 74-75.

³ *Ibid.*, II. iv. 76-78.

⁴ Valentine's reply to this question reveals the recognition of another courtly virtue: "My youthful *travel* therein made me happy."

⁵ *The Two Gentlemen*, IV. i. 55-58.

With reference to linguistic studies, Castiglione says, “I will have (our Courtier) to be more than indifferently well seene, at the least in those studies, which they call Humanitie, and to have not onely the understanding of the *Latin tongue*, but also of the *Greek*, because of the many and sundrie things that with great excellence are written in it.” He also attaches importance to the “knowledge of *sundrie tongues*, which I commend much in our courtier, and especially *Spanish* and *French*, because the entercourse of both the one nation and the other is much haunted in Italy, and these two are more agreeable unto us.”¹

When Silvia falls among outlaws in the forest near Mantua, they decide to bring her to their captain. They are convinced that

“—he bears an *honourable* mind,
And will not use a woman lawlessly.”²

It is Valentine's *sense of honour* (the prime virtue of the courtier) and *courage* that at last win the admiration of the Duke. Thurio proves a coward, and slinks away when challenged by Valentine, Proteus is discovered to be perjured and false, and at last the Duke recognises that Valentine who is

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. II.

² *The Two Gentlemen*, V. iii. 13-14.

also *well-born* like these, would be the best husband for his daughter. He says :

“ —Sir Valentine,
Thou art a *gentleman* and *well deriv'd* ;
Take thou thy Silvia, for thou hast *deserv'd* her.”¹

Courage which Castiglione applauds is moral rather than physical, and is different from skill in the use of arms, “ Such as thinke themselves neither marked, seene, nor knowne, and yet declare a stoute courage, and suffer not the least thing in the world to passe that may burthen them, they have that *courage of spirite* which we seeke to have in our courtier. Yet will wee not have him for all that so lustie to make *braverie in wordes*.” Courage is connected with the “*vertues of the mind*, and is the mark of an *honest man* and well-meaning.”

Eglamour is not an important character in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. He is described merely as “ Agent for Silvia, in her escape,” and hardly deserves any serious notice. The impress of *courtesy* is yet discernible in Silvia's characterisation of Eglamour :

“—thou art a *gentleman*—
Think not I flatter, for I swear I do not—
Valiant, wise, remorseful, well-accomplish'd.”²

¹ *The Two Gentlemen*, V. iv. 145-47.

² *Ibid.*, IV, iii. 11-13.

While Valentine wins admiration, Proteus who is otherwise almost his peer, is weighed in the balance and found wanting. The Renaissance glorified friendship and love, and Proteus is found to be false in both. He has to admit,

"To leave my Julia, shall I be forsworn ;
To love fair Silvia, shall I be forsworn ;
To wrong my friend, I shall be much forsworn—" ¹

Valentine rebukes him as a "treach'rous man" when he finds out his misdeeds. Want of a sense of honour or honesty (as Castiglione puts it) leads Proteus to envy ² the good luck of his friend, to betray him, to intrigue against Silvia and finally to try to ruin her. His fall is really lamentable, and it is only Valentine's exaggerated conception of friendship that gives him an opportunity to repent and to reform. Surrender of Silvia to Proteus, too, is an outcome of Valentine's adherence to the doctrine of romantic friendship. This Renaissance convention is endorsed in courtesy books. Castiglione opines that a friend

¹ *The Two Gentlemen*, II. vi. 1-3.

² Proteus violates the rule of conduct laid down for a true friend by Castiglione, "...let him...in especiall tende alwaies to goodnesse. No envious person, no carrier of an evil tongue in his head: nor at any time given to seeke preferment or promotion any naughtie way, nor by the meane of any subtill practise." (*The Courtier*, Bk. II.)

should be "diligent to serve, and to have an eye to his friendes profit and estimation, as wel absent as present, *bearing with their naturall defaults* that are to be borne withall, *without breaking with them upon a small ground.*"¹

In the sixteenth century responsible people in England believed that a knowledge of foreign languages and foreign politics should be acquired by youth who were "ambitious of playing a part in state affairs." This was looked upon as the finishing touch to their education which had the avowed object of preparing them for the service of their sovereign, and foreign travel was regarded as the best means of picking it up. Ascham disliked foreign travel as exposing young men to vice and immorality, but statesmen like Burleigh, Sidney, Bacon and Essex "saw in travel and particularly in contact with the French court the best training for public service."²

Sidney wrote a letter to his brother advising him to furnish himself "with the knowledge of

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. II. See "The Ending of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*" in *PMLA*, Vol. 48, p. 767. The conflict between conventional Renaissance friendship and love in the play ends in the unwarrantable sacrifice of the latter to the former, and the writer of the article finds no justification for this in its sources. He accordingly brands the ending of *The Two Gentlemen* as inartistic.

² Ruth Kelso, *The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 142-45.

such things as may be serviceable for your country and calling," through foreign travel; " for hard sure it is to know England, without you know it by comparing it with some other country." Numerous¹ books were written in England in the sixteenth century, containing advice for intending travellers, and many continental books of the same class were translated into English.

Shakespeare has a fling at the vogue of foreign travel in *As You Like It*. But in *The Two Gentlemen* his view is different. Valentine is of opinion that " Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits," and he tells his friend Proteus,

" I rather would entreat thy company
To see the wonders of the world abroad
Than, living dully sluggardiz'd at home,
Wear out thy youth with shapeless idleness." ²

Antonio's brother thinks that Proteus should

" —spend his time no more at home,
Which would be great impeachment to his age,
In having known no travel in his youth." ³

C. *Romeo and Juliet*

Romeo is a martyr to passionate love which is the law of his being. He is completely absorbed in

¹ Clare Howard's *English Travellers of the Renaissance* (1914) gives an interesting account of some of these books. See also J. E. Mason, *Gentlefolk in the Making*, p. 53.

² *The Two Gentlemen*, l. i. 5-8.

³ *Ibid.*, l. iii. 14-16.

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it, and his emotional exuberance leaves no room for any other interest. Though love is an ornament of the courtier's soul, it is not in his case an engrossing passion. Traces of other courtly virtues, however, are unmistakable in Shakespeare's Romeo. He is a skilful swordsman, and a high-born, witty and handsome youth with a charming personality. He counts among his devoted friends Benvolio and Mercutio, with whom he has occasional wit-combats. Even the Nurse is favourably impressed by him, though she is angry with Mercutio for his 'saucy' words. According to her, 'though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body, though they be not to be talked on, yet they are past compare.' He is "as gentle as a lamb," "an honest gentleman, and a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and, I warrant, a virtuous." Friar Laurence's sharp rebuke to Romeo when he is cast down by the sentence of banishment, has pointed reference to some of his courtly virtues—wit, beauty, and valour:

"Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,
 Digressing from the *valour* of a man.
 Thy dear love, sworn, but hollow perjury,
 Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish:
 Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,
 Misshapen in the conduct of them both,
 Like powder in a skillless soldier's flask....."

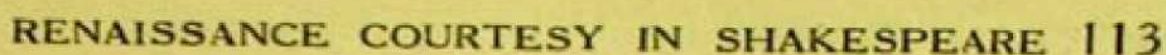
These lines do not occur in the First Quarto

(1597). One textual critic thinks they were introduced later, and had the effect of modifying the original conception of Romeo's character. White, however, says that the absence ¹ of these lines (along with a few others close to them) can be accounted for by the fact that the First Quarto was surreptitious and defective. Though in Shakespeare Romeo developed from an ordinary gallant into an almost Renaissance gentleman, the dramatist, according to White, had drawn the full portrait in his first draft, for his source did indeed contain some suggestion for it. The words of the Friar in Brooke's poem are, however, only an exhortation to Romeus to be manly in danger, and are also halting.² There is little in them that might inspire the passage put into the mouth of Friar Laurence by Shakespeare whose contribution must be regarded as original.

The story of Romeo and Juliet has a long ancestry, but the immediate source of Shakespeare's

¹ See the note in the New Variorum Edition of *Romeo and Juliet*.

² Art thou quoth he a man ? thy shape saith, so thou
art;
Thy crying, and thy weping eyes denote a womans
hart.
For manly reason is quite from of thy mynd
outchased,
And in her stead affections lewd and fancies highly
placed.



play was Brooke's poem *Romeus and Juliet* (1562) and a prose story in Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure* ¹ (1567). Both had drawn upon the French version of Bandello's novel ² by Pierre Boiastuau in Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*. There are slight hints in both about Romeo's physical beauty, youth, studies and parentage, but these do not bring out his personality as it is known in Shakespeare. Yet it must be conceded that in many cases the source has supplied Shakespeare with suggestions even more sparingly. In Brooke's poem ³ Romeus is a Montague

“ Upon whose tender chyn, as yet no manlyke
beard there grewe,
Whose *beauty* and whose *shape* so farre the rest
dyd stayne :
That from the cheefe of Veron youth he *greatest fame*
dyd gayne.”

In remonstrating with the love-lorn youth, his friend gives some indication of his good points :

“ Both *yong* thou art of yeres, and high in Fortunes
grace :
 What man is *better shapd* than thou? who hath a
swetter face ?
 By *painfull studies* meane, great learning hast
thou wonne.”

¹ E. Dowden, Introduction to *Romeo and Juliet*.

² Ninth of the Second Part of the *Novelle* (1554).

³ See "Shakespeare's Deviations from *Romeus and Juliet*" in *PMLA*, Vol. LII, p. 68.

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In Paynter the friend's speech has this line, "Thou arte yong, *rich* in goods and fortune, and more excellent in *beauty* than any gentleman in thys cyty ; thou art well learned, and the onely sonne of the house whereof thou commest." The author thus comments on Romeus' banishment, "Other (specially the ladies and gentlewomen) bewailed the overthrow of yong Rhomeo, who besides his *beauty* and *good grace* wherwith he was enriched, had a certayne *naturall allurements*, by vertue whereof he *drew unto him the hearts of eche man*, like as the stony adamante doth the cancred iron." The Nurse's remarks in Brooke, though a little more elaborate, are in the same conventional strain :

" The best *yshapde* is he, and hath the *fayrest face*,
Of all this towne, and there is none hath halfe so
good a grace,
So gentle of his speche, and of his counsell wise."

Thus the source-books especially describe the outward appearance of Romeo. But the lovely and intelligent figure, brimful of passionate words and witty repartee, created by Shakespeare out of a few slight hints, is really the product of that imagination which delighted in the culture of the Renaissance.

Mercutio's sallies of wit mark him out as one of the most interesting characters in the play. " So brilliant a figure had never before irradiated the English stage." He could have been classed

as a Renaissance gentleman, but he is sometimes too exuberant, obtrusive and boisterous, and elegance, gentleness and grace can hardly be attributed to him. Again "Mercutio was created to appear only three or four times, and then suddenly to be withdrawn." He is valiant, and does not hesitate to fight. This might be partly due to the atmosphere of blood-feud in Verona. Yet there is a difference between Shakespeare's Mercutio and his prototype in Brooke, and critics have pointed out "the conversion of Mercutio from a mere 'courtier'—'bolde emong the bashfull maydes,' 'courteous of speech and pleasant of devise,' into that splendid *union of the knight and the fine gentleman*, in portraying which Shakespeare, with prophetic eye piercing a century, shows us the fire of faded chivalry expiring in a flash of wit."¹

Count Paris possesses a balanced character. He has neither Romeo's passion, nor Mercutio's wit. He loves, and yet can hardly be called a lover. His virtues, as enumerated by Capulet, are many. Yet he does not impress one as belonging to an age and a society which valued inner worth only as revealed in speech and conduct. In his case there has not been any such transformation in Shakespeare's play as has been noticed in the case of Mercutio or Romeo.

¹ E. Dowden, Introduction to *Romeo and Juliet*.

He remains almost exactly as he is in Brooke and Paynter—a young aristocrat who is likely to be accepted as husband by any girl of high family bound by the conventions of social life. In Brooke

"Emong the rest was one inflamde with her desire.
Who County Paris clipped was; an *earle he had to syre*."

Juliet's mother describes in detail

"...The person of the man, the fewters of his face,
His *youthfull yeres*, his *fayrenes*, and his port, and
semely grace."

In Paynter, her mother discourses to Julietta on "the *beauty and good grace* of the yong counte, the *vertues* for which he was commended of al men, joyning thereunto for conclusion the great *richesse* and favor which he had in the goods of fortune." The praise of Paris by Capulet and his wife in the play is almost similarly phrased. The latter calls him "the *gallant*, young and noble *gentleman*," while her husband waxes eloquent over

"A gentleman of *noble parentage*,
Of *fair demesnes*, youthful, and *nobly train'd*,
Stuff'd, as they say, with *honourable parts*—" ¹

D. *The Merchant of Venice*

This is looked upon as one of the characteristically Italian plays of Shakespeare. It has in the background the commercial activities of the

¹ *Romeo and Juliet*, III. v. 181-83.

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period of the Renaissance in Italy and gives glimpses of the great mercantile communities which sprang into importance with the growth of the Mediterranean trade between Europe and the East. Shakespeare refers to the Rialto, the riches of the merchants, argosies 'bound to Tripolis' and 'to the Indies,' vessels from Mexico and England, 'from Lisbon, Barbary, and India—with 'silks' and 'spices'; he represents how 'the trade and profit of the city consisteth of all nations.'¹ The negotiation for the loan talks about the security, the rate of interest and the bond, reference to the notary and to the rights of the citizens safeguarded by charter, the open court where justice is administered—all these mark a change from the feudal and classical epochs painted in some of the other plays of Shakespeare.² Side by side with freedom of person, security of property and economic prosperity

¹ See 'Shakespeare's Venice' in *MLR.*, Vol. 27, p. 24.

² The spirit of Venice and its atmosphere seem even to have been reflected in Shakespeare's poetic imagery. For example, the magnificent array of ships in the Adriatic suggests a parallel to the high bearing and commercial greatness of the Venetian grandee:

"—your argosies with portly sail,—
Like signiors and rich burghers of the flood,
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,—
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curtsy to them—."

(*The Merchant of Venice*, I. i. 9-13.)

enjoyed by the people, there is also noticeable the love of culture. Appreciation of beauty—of art and music—is keen. Says Hiene, “We see . . . the costly, tasteful villeggiatura life in the beautiful palace of Belmont, where all is light and music, where, among pictures, marble statues, and lofty laurel trees, the suitors in their brilliant array wander, meditating on the love riddle, and from amid all this splendour Signorina Portia shines forth like a goddess.” She “represents that after-bloom of Greek art which, in the sixteenth century, impregnated the world, from Italy outwards, with its delightful fragrance, and which we . . . love and treasure under the name of the Renaissance.”¹ Women are marked by shrewdness of judgment and determination, and they boldly shoulder responsibility. Shakespeare might not have visited Italy, but his imagination has supplied what could have been gathered only by close personal observation.

Two separate stories have been combined in *The Merchant of Venice*. They have been traced “through the literature not only of the West, but of the East.” Tales having something in common with each of these stories are found in the *Gesta Romanorum* which has been mentioned as one of Shakespeare’s possible sources.²

¹ E. Dowden, Introduction to *The Merchant of Venice*.

² Says Dowden, “Shakespeare may have been acquainted with Richard Robinson’s revision of Wynkyn de Worde’s version of the *Gesta Romanorum* (1577).”

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It has been suggested that the combination of the two stories in the play indicates the dramatist's debt to the lost play,¹ *The Jew*, mentioned by Gosson. Yet his obligation to the first novel of the Fourth day in Ser Giovanni Fiorentino's *Il Pecorone* is very probable.² It contains only the bond story, and has points of resemblance with the relevant portion of *The Merchant of Venice*, one of them being the part played by its hero.

Giannetto is the name of the youth who corresponds to Bassanio. He is the youngest son of a rich merchant who bequeaths his properties to his two elder sons. Giannetto is adopted by Ansaldo, another wealthy merchant of Venice, and a friend of his father's, who grows very fond of him. He asks him to win popularity by entertaining his friends. Giannetto takes exercise, rides and cultivates pleasant manners. Says Fiorentino, "Giannetto cominciò a usare co' gentil-uomini di Vinegia, a fare corti, desinari, a donare, e vestir famigli e a comperare di buoni corsieri, e a giostrare e bagordare, come quel ch'era esperto e

¹ Tyrwhitt is of opinion that Shakespeare "followed some hitherto unknown novelist, who had saved him the trouble of working up the two stories into one." See F. Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, Vol. I, p. 274.

² See E. Dowden, Introduction to *The Merchant of Venice*. If Shakespeare did not know enough of Italian, "he followed here some literal translation of the novel in *Il Pecorone*. None such has, however, reached our time." (J. P. Collier, *Shakespeare's Library*, Vol. II.)

pratico, e *magnanimo e cortese in ogni cosa*; e ben sapeva fare onore e cortesia dove si conveniva, e sempre rendeva onore a messere Ansaldo, più che se fosse stato cento volte suo padre. Eseppe si saviamente mantenere con ogni maniera di gente, che quasi il comune di Vinegia gli voleva bene, veggendolo tanto savio e con tanta piacevolezza, e cortese oltre a misura; di che le donne e gli uomini ne parevano innamorati." But he' has no intellectual attainments, no strength of character and no idea of true love. Shakespeare creates Bassanio out of such uninviting stuff. The latter is of noble descent, and not a mere merchant's son given in adoption to another merchant, such as Giannetto is. The latter had also been *possessed of wealth*, but he has run through his fortune, and is in debt. He says to Portia :

" I freely told you all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman : " ²

¹ Giannetto's manners also pleased the nobles of the court of the Lady of Belmonte, when the youth first visited it. " Piacque molto a tutti i baroni la maniera di Giannetto, e' l suo essere costumato e piacevole e parlante; sì che quasi ogniuno se ne innamorò, e tutto quel giorno si danzò e si cantò, e fecesi festa nella Corte per amore di Giannetto."

Giannetto's characteristics are mainly those of the fashionable young man about the town. His sole interest lay in amusements and entertainments. He had, under the advice of his adoptive father, deliberately been trying to make himself popular in Venice. This advice might possibly have been inspired by commercial motives.

² III, ii, 255-56.

He is, in addition, "a scholar and a soldier." High birth, wealth, learning and skill in fighting were, as already mentioned, the recognised index of Renaissance courtesy. Nerissa says, . . . "he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was *the best deserving a fair lady*." And this view is endorsed by Portia herself. That Bassanio's grace does not depend on mere comeliness of person, appears from the fact that it attracts not only Portia's love, but also the friendship of a high-souled man like Antonio and of other Venetians. His capacity for love and friendship is large, but it is consonant with the ideal of the Renaissance. His courtesy is manifest when he sends a messenger to Belmont with "regreets" and gifts, and it impresses even Portia's servant who joyfully announces to his lady,

"—there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify the approaching of his lord ;
From whom he bringeth sensible regreets,
To wit,—besides commends and *courteous breath*,—
Gifts of rich value."

Bassanio is a contrast to Gratiano whose manners are lacking in dignity, and who is much too frank and unrestrained in speech. The *gentle* Bassanio is rather reluctant to take him to Belmont as a companion, and observes :

"Thou art too wild, too *rude and bold of voice* ;
Parts that become thee happily enough,

And in such eyes as ours appear not faults ;
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit, lest, through thy wild behaviour,
I be misconstru'd in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.”¹

Gratiano tacitly admits the truth of the charges levelled against him, and promises to “talk with respect” and “use all the observance of civility” when in Belmont.

The contrast between the courteous, unassuming and modest Bassanio and the other two suitors of Portia, is marked enough. The Prince of Morocco is inordinately proud of his physical strength, and has not the sense to realise how vulgar it is to boast of it in the presence of a lady whom he meets for the first time. He thus harangues Portia :

“ I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine
Hath fear'd the valiant : by my love, I swear
The best regarded virgins of our clime
Have lov'd it too.”

Again, he declares :

“ By this scimitar,—
That slew the Sophy, and a Persian prince
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,—
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look...” etc.

He has no doubt about his own worth :

“ I do in *birth* deserve her, and in *fortunes*,
In *graces*, and in qualities of *breeding*—”

¹ *The Merchant of Venice*, II. ii. 180-87.

But according to Castiglione, the courtier should "be no babler, not given to lightnesse, no lyar, no boaster."¹ "He therefore . . . where the enemies are, shall show himself most fierce, bitter and evermore with the first. In every place beside, lowly, sober and circumspect, fleeing above all things, *bragging* and *unshameful praising himself*."² Castiglione mentions a man who "to entertaine a gentle woman whom he never saw before, . . . began to tell how many men he had slaine, and what a hardie fellow hee was and how hee coulde play at two-hand sword." The dark-skinned *braggadocio* of Africa cannot but be repulsive to a cultured and beautiful lady like Portia. His speech is disgusting to her, and she replies very briefly. When he goes away disappointed, she feels relieved and says :

"Let all of *his complexion* choose me so."

The Prince of Arragon has intense *intellectual pride*, and is eager to prove that he is far above the "common spirits"—"the barbarous multitude." He thinks that he is almost a paragon of perfection—one whose merit is deserving of any reward. He too has not that modesty which marks out Bassanio. Portia sees how his "wisdom" is only "wit to lose," though Arragon is convinced that his judgment, though incomprehensible to the ordinary

¹ *The Courtier*, Book II.

² *The Courtier*, Book I.

intellect, is unerring. Castiglione observes that the courtier should be free from " a certaine loftie and unmannerly stubbornesse, as some men have that show themselves not to wonder at the things which other men doe, because they take upon them that they can doe them much better : and with their silence doe commend them as unworthy to bee spoken of, and will make a gesture (in a manner) as though none beside were (I will not say their equal) but able to conceive the understanding of the prowesse of their cunning." While she is glad to get rid of him, as she was to dismiss the Prince of Morocco, Portia is charmed with the sweet manners and gentle speech of Bassanio, and asks him to delay his choice :

" I pray you, tarry : pause a day or two
Before you hazard ; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company." ¹

There are critics who have not been able to discover any merit in Bassanio. They find in him only the worst type of prodigality, and regard him as a sort of adventurer trying to repair his broken fortune by marrying an heiress. He is also charged with heartlessness in exposing his dearest friend to personal danger for funds which he needed for his " venture." But Bassanio strongly objected to Antonio's signing the bond when Shylock had included the forfeiture clause. It was Antonio

¹ *The Merchant of Venice*, III. ii. 1-3.

who assured Bassanio that he could easily repay and readily agreed to the terms of Shylock. As for prodigality, the Renaissance looked not upon frugality, but upon the Aristotelian liberality as a mark of moral excellence. Its conception of the *gentleman* or *courtier*, definitely involved possession of adequate wealth without which hospitality and entertainments were impossible.¹ The excess of the Aristotelian virtue was practised by Timon. Bassanio did not go so far as he, nor did he waste his "estate" on any vice. He tells Antonio frankly :

"—I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance ;
Nor do I now make moan to be abridg'd
From such a *noble rate*."

Bassanio's liberality does not appear to have exceeded the limits laid down either by the Aristotelian or the Renaissance conception of decent life.¹

Gentle, courteous, modest, comely, scholarly and skilled in arms, Bassanio has also a capacity for

¹ Says Castiglione, "He ought to be full of liberality and sumptuous, and give unto every man without stint, for God (as they say) is the treasurer of free-hearted princes: make gorgeous banquets, feastes, games, etc." (*The Courtier*, Book IV.)

noble love. According to Castiglione, the Renaissance writer who had been influenced by Plato's ideas as explained by Ficino, Pico, Bembo and others in the light of Neo-Platonism, love is of three kinds. The lowest is an attribute of sense, and is attracted to objects which appeal only to sense-organs. The second is love of intelligible things,—of institutions, rules and systems (of law, government, etc.), and the third and best is the love of spiritual entities which transcend sense and intellect. Castiglione says, " Love is nothing else but a certaine coveting to enjoy beutie. . . . It is requisite that knowledge goe evermore before coveting. . . . In our soule there be three manner waies to know, namely, by sense, reason, and understanding ; of sense there ariseth appetite or longing which is common to us with brute beastes ; of reason ariseth election or choice, which is proper to man ; of understanding, by the which man may be partner with Angels, ariseth will. Even as therefore the sense knoweth not but sensible matters, and that which may be felt, so the appetite or coveting onely deserveth the same ; and even as the understanding is bent but to behold things that may bee understood, so is that wil onely fedde with spirituall goods. Man of nature endowed with reason, placed (as it were) in the middle betweene these two extremities, may, through his choice inclining to sense, or reaching to understanding, come nigh to the coveting sometime of the one, sometime of the other part. In these

sortes threfore may beautie be coveted, the generall name wherfore may be applyed to all thinges."¹ The courtier is expected to rise on the stepping-stone of the first two kinds of love to the plane of the third and highest kind, *viz.*, spiritual love. Bassanio stands for the ideal lover, while the Prince of Morocco and the Prince of Arragon represent the first and second types of love respectively. The whole course of the caskets story illustrates this. The Prince of Morocco is as much a believer in physical strength as in the glamour of sensible things. "Desire" induced by sense-appeal, is strong in him, and he selects the golden casket with the motto, "Who chooseth me shall gain what many men *desire*." Portia, whom he addresses as "my gentle queen," with her youth, beauty and wealth, is only an object of "desire" to him as, he assumes, she must have been to other men; and burnished gold alone was, in his view, a fit receptacle for her portrait. The Prince of Arragon is argumentative and full of intellectual vanity. He despises "undeserved dignity," and believes that his *merit*—superior to vulgar people's—fully deserves the splendid reward. Neither greed nor vanity is a characteristic of Bassanio. His love of Portia is the outcome of the true communion of kindred souls. Before

¹ *The Courtier*, Book IV. The same view about the threefold division of human faculties is to be found in Romei's *Discorsi*.

approaching Antonio for help he has already received “from her eyes” “fair speechless messages.”¹ It is for love’s sake that he has come ready to “give and hazard all he hath.” Portia notices, when he approaches the caskets, how

“ he goes,

With no less presence, but with much *more love*,
Than young Alcides when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster.”

The real nature of this love is set off by the song which follows.² It explains how “fancy” is “begot” in “the eyes,” and is “with gazing fed,” and how “fancy dies in the cradle where it lies.” Fancy means “desire” or “sensuous attraction” which, having no roots in the human soul, is short-lived. “Fancy’s knell” is rung while Bassanio comments on the caskets, and when it is over, spiritual love triumphs and guides his choice. Here is a pointed contrast to the device Giannetto had to adopt in order to win the lady of Belmonte, which is unseemly, and grossly offends against the sense of decorum associated with culture.

Though the influence of Renaissance courtesy is noticeable in the conception of Bassanio’s

¹ *The Merchant of Venice*, I. i. 164.

² See ‘Bassanio as an Ideal Lover’ in *Manly Anniversary Studies*. Guazzo in his *Civil Conversation* refers to the eyes as having a greater power of generating love than the tongue. *Fancy* in Elizabethan English connotes *desire*.

character, it must be admitted that he has not, in any appreciable measure, that gift of "bel parlare" which is one of its chief requisites. Neither sense of humour nor felicity of expression can be claimed for him. Portia, however, has all the accomplishments of a "gentlewoman of the court," though of a dignified type, with 'high intellect' and 'energy of will.' She is "nothing undervalu'd to Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia," and is clearly distinguishable from the "avaricious siren" of Belmonte who puts her suitors 'to sleep with some drowsy syrup.'

E. *Much Ado About Nothing*

Bandello's story¹ is the chief source of the Hero and Claudio plot. Claudio has almost the same attributes as Trimbreo, and neither is in any sense remarkable *for grace or inner worth*. Some critics have failed to discover a single virtue in Claudio, and wondered why an accomplished girl like Hero should have fallen in love with him. Timbreo in the Italian novel is a knight who has distinguished himself in war—"cavalier e barone molto stimato, ed il quale il re Piero, perchè era prode de la persona, e ne le passate guerre sempre s'era valorosamente diportato, sommamente amava." But besides wealth, noble ancestry, physical beauty and skill in fighting, he has

¹ Novella XXII, Parte Prima.

no other distinguishing feature—no learning, eloquence, wit or striking personality. Fenicia belongs to a family which is very ancient, but poor and plebeian. "Era il legnaggio di M. Lionato¹ in Messina antichissimo e nobile, e di molta riputazione, ma le sue ricchezze erano di privato gentiluomo." The girl has no other attraction than physical beauty (she is only *avvenente e bella*). Claudio is nobly descended (he is a young Lord of Florence), tactful and brave as a soldier, and he bears himself "beyond the promise of his age."² He is also "a proper squire"³ and "most exquisite." When he falls in love, his unimaginative nature indeed undergoes a slight change. In the words of Benedick, "now is he turned orthographer; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes." But he has neither *intellectual* predilections, nor depth of feeling. Really he possesses no charm which is born of culture.

In so far, then, as Shakespeare follows Bandello, there is little trace of "courtesy" in his play. And if Benedick had been conceived under the same influence as Claudio, he would have been, in one sense, as colourless as the latter. But the dramatist is perhaps quite original in the episode of Benedick and Beatrice, for scholars have so far been unsuccessful in tracing its source.

¹ Father of Fenicia.

² *Much., Ado About Nothing*, I. i. 13-14.

³ *Ibid.*, iii. 47-49.

Shakespeare had imbibed more of the virtue of *courtesy* than the Italian novelist, and Benedick is probably the most typical courtier in Shakesperean drama. He is nobly descended—is a young Lord of Padua—and is a skilful warrior. The Messenger says, "He hath done good service...in these wars,"¹ and calls him "a good soldier."² He is almost a prince amongst men—"a lord to a lord, a man to a man, stuffed with all *honourable virtues*."³ Don Pedro confirms the opinion of the Messenger in his own observations: "Thus far can I praise him; he is of a *noble strain*, of approved *valour*, and confirmed *honesty*."⁴ According to Claudio, he is also "a very *proper* man," and "very *wise*." The praise of Benedick in Act III, sc. i is, of course, meant for the ears of Beatrice in the arbour. But it cannot be far from the truth, as Beatrice is known to be shrewd enough to detect exaggeration. Don Pedro tells Benedick himself later how he has described him to Beatrice. Unless his views have some substratum of truth, they would, the Prince must have realised, sound as mockery to Benedick. And he knows that Benedick, who has just thrown out a challenge to his friend Claudio, is not in a mood to enjoy a jest. In Don Pedro's opinion, then, Benedick is also a "*wise*," i.e., a cultured

¹ *Much Ado About Nothing*, I. i. 47.

² *Ibid.*, I. i. 52.

³ *Ibid.*, I. i. 55-56.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II. i. 371-73. See also *Ibid.*, II. iii. 187-197.

man, has “a fine *wit*” and “hath the *tongues*.”¹ Beatrice is reported to have said that he is “the *properest* man in Italy.”² There must also be some truth in the view expressed by Ursula (though meant for Beatrice’s consumption) that Benedick is “so rare a *gentleman*,” and “For *shape*, for *bearing*, *argument* and *valour*, goes foremost in report through Italy.”³ His ‘quick wit’⁴ is an indication of strong intellectual powers and shrewd insight. He loves dancing, music and sonneteering.⁵ Benedick thus possesses all the qualifications which Italian courtesy books consider desirable in a courtier. His real profession is *arms*—so important in the opinion of Castiglione,⁶—though this is apt to be forgotten on account of his brilliant powers of conversation. Intellect, beauty and character or virtue, so highly valued in the *Cortegiano*, combine in harmonious proportion in this courtier. Claudio is unstable; he loves almost at first sight, and is crestfallen the moment he learns that Don Pedro has wooed Hero for himself. His love disappears as soon as he is beguiled by Don John, and with unspeakable cruelty he besmirches the character of Hero in public and breaks her heart. There can be no comparison

¹ *Much Ado About Nothing*, V. i. 160-66.

² *Ibid.*, V. i. 170-72.

³ *Ibid.*, III. i. 91, 96-97.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II. i. 376.

⁵ *Ibid.*, II. i ; V. iv. 86; II. iii. 57-58.

⁶ See *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

between Claudio and Benedick who is really possessed of great qualities of head and heart.

It is clear that unless Benedick had many-sided merit, he could not possibly have attracted the attention of such a brilliant and accomplished lady as Beatrice. Beatrice's interest in Benedick had started before the story of the play began, though it usually revealed itself as antipathy and sometimes as indifference. Whenever they had met in the past, they had had a wit-combat, and this again takes place in the very first scene of the play when they meet "before Leonato's house." Beatrice's enquiry about Signior Mountanto is quite significant; at any rate, it is clear that she considers Benedick to be an opponent worthy of her steel.

The Courtier gives rules for the education of women, which is somewhat different from that of men¹ on account of their comparative weakness. Women, for example, are unfit for rough games. Dancing is one of the most suitable exercises for them. Drawing, painting, music and the devising of sports and pastimes are especially recommended in their case.² An accomplished woman must not be envious or "sharp-tongued." *Beauty, noble descent, grace and wit* are very desirable in her, and thus "in conversation, in laughing, in sporting, in jesting, finally in everie thing she shal be had in

¹ See *The Courtier*, Bk. III.

² *The Courtier*, Bk. III.

great price, and shall entertaine accordingly both with jestes, and feate conceites meete for her, every person that commeth in her company."¹ "And albeit *stayedness, noblenesse of courage, temperance, strength of the minde, wisdom, and the other vertues*, a man would thinke belonged not to entertaine, yet will I have her endowed with them all, not so much to entertaine as *to be vertuous*: and these vertues to make her such a one, that she may deserve to bee esteemed." The reason given by Lord Julian for requiring so many qualifications in a woman, reflects the many-sided Renaissance spirit. "I fashion a waiting gentlewoman of the court . . . and so shall she be not onely beloved but revered of all men, and perhaps worthy to be *compared to this great Courtier*." The *Cortegiano* is thus, in one sense, in favour of the equality of the sexes in respect of their culture. The courtier and the "gentlewoman of the court" are expected to live on the same plane and to mix on equal terms. This ideal is fully realised in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Not much is expressly said of Beatrice's specific qualifications, but there can be no doubt that she was highly cultured. Claudio's testimony that "she is exceeding *wise*" and Don Pedro's tribute that "she is *virtuous*"² are both confirmed by Benedick: "They say the lady is

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. II.

² *Much Ado About Nothing*, II. iii. 166-67.

fair : 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness ; and
virtuous : 'tis so, I cannot reprove it ; and *wise*." ¹
 Her culture and strength of character really make
 themselves felt. She is a sort of mentor to Hero
 who is tender and frail. But it is her brilliant wit
 that marks her off from the other Shakesperean
 heroines. This is the swift rapier-thrust which even
 Benedick fears. He thinks, " she speaks poniards,
 and every word stabs ; if her breath were as terrible
 as her terminations, there were no living near her." ²
 She is an adept in the use of her weapon which
 she requires for self-defence as well as for attacks
 and counter-attacks which are mostly fatal. It is this
 that shows her to advantage as the " gentlewoman
 of the palace " *par excellence*, holding her own on
 terms of equality with clever men. She is no respec-
 ter of persons, and cracks jokes with her uncle with-
 out the slightest conventional regard for his old age,
 as much as with Don Pedro. But nobody takes
 offence. " I was born to speak all mirth and no
 matter," she says apologetically to the Prince,
 who thus compliments her, " Your silence most
 offends me, and to be merry best becomes you :
 for, out of question, you were born in a merry
 hour." She says she has read the *Hundred* ²
Merry Tales, but she need not have done it at
 all. Wit seems to be almost an instinct with
 her. Beatrice may be contrasted with cultured

¹ *Much Ado About Nothing*, II. iii. 233-35.

² *Ibid.*, II. i. 129.

but subdued types of women in Shakespeare, like Katharine in *King Henry VIII*.

It is Beatrice's and Benedick's sallies of wit that mainly constitute the atmosphere of *Much Ado*. This owes more to Castiglione's picture of the court life in Urbino than the background of *Love's Labour's Lost*. Humour and characterisation in Shakespeare had shaken off their crudity when *Much Ado* was written, and their evolution was largely due to the influence of the *Cortegiano*. Sir Walter Raleigh says, "At the time when Hoby's *Courtyer* was published, and during the ensuing years, the favourite characters of our native Comic Muse were Ralph Roister Doister, Diccon the Bedlam, Huff, Ruff, etc. . . . The speeches that she loved best were loud lies and vain boasts; her chosen actions were . . . the rank deceits of tricksters and parasites, the rough and tumble of clown, fool and vice in villainous disorder. Yet this same English comic stage was soon to echo to the wit of Beatrice and Benedick, of Rosalind and Orlando. The best models of courtly dialogue available for Lyly and Shakespeare were to be sought in *Italy*: not in the Italian drama which was given over to the classical tradition, but in just such natural sparkling conversations as were recorded in the dialogue form of Italian prose. And of these the best are to be tasted in *The Courtier*."¹ "Nowhere else (as in *Much Ado*)

¹ Introduction to *The Book of the Courtier*.

does Shakespeare so clearly reflect the delight in brilliant conversation that marked the courtly circles of the Renaissance, more particularly of Renaissance Italy where his scene is set."¹

It is true that Beatrice's tongue is too sharp, especially against Benedick. She is the "Lady Tongue" who, as Leonato puts it, "*mocks* all her wooers out of suit." It is here that she fails to come up to the standard required of the "gentlewoman of the court." Castiglione lays down that she should not be "ill-tongued" or "contentious," and that she should have "above all other thinges, a certaine sweetnesse in language that may delite, wherby she may gently entertain all kinde of men." Hence it is difficult to agree in the view of Miss Mary Scott that Lady Emilia Pia in the *Cortegiano* is the original of Beatrice.² Lady Pia is certainly gentle and sweet. Her position, apart from her inherent nature, makes it impossible for her to express herself in mordant language, and actually she never says anything that has a sting. As president of the assembly, she attempts not to take sides, but to give an opportunity to other members to reply whenever any controversial remark is made. Her humour is delightful and mostly impersonal. But Beatrice is sarcastic,

¹ F. E. Budd, Introduction to *Much Ado About Nothing*.

² *PMLA*, Vol. 16.,

especially against Benedick, for whom she feels an undercurrent of love. Lady Pia has no fascination for anybody in the secret recesses of her heart—not even for Gaspar. Gaspar, again, is not the prototype of Benedick. The latter, notwithstanding all that he may have said against marriage, is not a misogynist as Gaspar professes to be. He gives no reasons why he should not marry. He would just have nothing to do with the other sex. "Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is,—for the which I may go the finer,—I will live a bachelor."¹ Speeches by young men against womankind, love and marriage are common in Elizabethan Literature. Reference may be made to Menaphon's speech against Venus in Green's *Menaphon*. In *The Noblytye off Wymen* by William Bercher, inspired by the Italian work *La Nobilita delle Donne* of M. Lodovico Domenichi and dedicated to Queen Elizabeth (1559), Orlando and Camillo speak for and against women respectively, while a countess presides over the debate. Benedick thinks of women only with reference to his own proposed marriage. His hatred of them, as is obvious, is only suppressed attraction for Beatrice. Most of his remarks against women are facetious. The case is quite different with Gaspar who seems to believe that women are

¹ I. i. 240-43.

more incontinent than men and more prone to temptation, that they relish scandals and that they are lacking in courage and absolutely worthless. He declares with brutal cynicism, "He that possesseth the bodie of women, is also maister of the minde." There is really no sustained wit-combat between Gaspar and Lady Pia, though slight skirmishes between them take place occasionally. There is one right at the beginning of the book. Gaspar is answered not by Lady Pia, but by Bernard and by Lord Julian whom she calls a champion of women. Again, Gaspar not only protests against the traditional belief in female virtue, but also speaks against all views which appear to be dogmatic or are cogently expressed. He is a sceptic always casting doubts on accepted ideas.

If there are any originals of Benedick and Beatrice, they are to be found in Berowne and Rosaline in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Dumaine and Katharine, and Longaville and Maria are faint copies of Berowne and Rosaline. *Love's Labour's Lost* was possibly Shakespeare's first comedy and was written about 1591, while *Much Ado* was a brilliant mature romantic comedy of the middle period, written about 1598. The source of *Love's Labour's Lost*, as much as that of the Beatrice and Benedick episode in *Much Ado*, is unknown. If the plot of the former was the dramatist's own invention, it is no wonder that he should have

repeated it in *Much Ado*. There are examples of Shakespeare's use of the same *motif* in different plays, in slightly different forms.

F. *As You Like It*

The source of this comedy is Lodge's *Rosalynde : Euphues' Golden Legacie*. Lodge had obviously drawn upon *The Tale of Gamelyn* which, according to some, is erroneously ascribed to Chaucer. There is no love-adventure in the latter, which is an "honest rough-and-tumble piece." Shakespeare's play has almost nothing to do with it, and follows Lodge's closely. Rosader, Lodge's hero, resembles Gamelyn to some extent. But Shakespeare's Orlando is an improvement upon Rosader, and this has been partly due to the influence of the ideal of courtesy.

In *The Tale of Gamelyn* the youngest of the three brothers is a boorish and reckless creature. He is feared by all, and everybody wants to avoid his company. Remarks the poet :

" Ther was non therinne nowther yong ne olde,
That wolde wraththe Gamelyn, were he never
so bolde."

On the death of their father the eldest brother defrauds Gamelyn of his rights, and the latter has actually to live as his dependant. The eldest one day asks for his "meat," but Gamelyn, who is dissatisfied with his position, rebukes him for wasting his share of the heritage. The eldest loses his

temper, and asks his servants to beat Gamelyn. The latter opposes, and in the fight that follows the servants have the worst of it. A truce is concluded, but through the machinations of the eldest brother, Gamelyn is cast in chains and kept closely confined. He, however, soon manages to escape with Adam, the old servant, to a neighbouring forest where he is crowned king by a band of outlaws with whose help he ultimately seizes the city, takes possession of the law courts, hangs his eldest brother and becomes the Chief Justice of King's forest. Though Lodge's story is different, by reason of the introduction of the love-episodes, the pranks of his hero are similar to those of Gamelyn. Both Rosader and Gamelyn—and Gamelyn more glaringly than Rosader—are violent in temper, untutored and graceless. They are like rough, shapeless stone out of which Shakespeare carves the attractive figure of Orlando.

Based as it is on Lodge's romance, *As You Like it* has a pastoral atmosphere. It has been said that "England and Arcady meet in this forest of France (*i.e.*, the Forest of Arden), with its exotic fauna and flora." It is natural, therefore, that in their love-affair, "at once so earnest and so sportive," which "moves through the sun-dappled spaces and over the dewy sward below the oaks of Arden," Orlando and Rosalind should look more like shepherd and shepherdess than like courtly people. "The genuine English peasant, the Dresden-china shepherd and shepherdess, and

the noble youth and maiden of romance cross each other in the greenwood.” But whatever might be the significance of his surroundings, Orlando has certainly a tinge of *courtesy*, which distinguishes him from Lodge’s Rosader. High ancestry, good breeding, grace and popularity,¹ as mentioned in the *Cortegiano*, are his chief mark. He is actually proud of his high parentage, and demands that his eldest brother should recognise this. “In the *gentle condition of blood*, you should so know me. The courtesy of nations allows you my better, in that you are the first-born; but the same tradition takes not away my *blood*.”² His sincere desire for good breeding commensurate with his ancestry, leads him to complain bitterly against the arrangement under which he is made by Oliver to live:—“call you that *keeping* for a *gentleman* of my birth, that differs not from the stalling of an ox? His (Oliver’s) horses are bred better; for, . . . they are taught their *manage*, and to that end riders dearly hired.”³ He has also an ambition for literary training and scholarship, which shows the trace of Renaissance Humanism. Orlando refers to the directions⁴ given by his late father for his education,

¹ For Castiglione’s view on popularity, see p. 178, *post*.

² I. i. 44-47.

³ I. i. 8-12.

⁴ There is no mention of this in Lodge’s romance.

and is dissatisfied that in spite of it, Oliver as much as in him lies, "mines my *gentility* with my *education*."¹ He resents the differential treatment of the two younger brothers at the hands of the eldest, "My brother Jaques he keeps at school, and report speaks goldenly of his profit . . . for my part, he keeps me *rustically* at home, or, to speak more properly, stays me here at home *unkept*." Rosader in Lodge's romance has no such keen aspiration either for good breeding or for scholarship, though he complains against being a mere footboy while Saladyne is enjoying the whole of the ancestral property. He naturally thinks that it would have been better for him "to become a scholler, or in the court a courtier or in the field a souldier."

Oliver has to admit that Orlando is not only of excellent address, *i.e.*, *graceful* in his manners, but also very popular—far more popular than he. ". . . he's gentle, . . . full of *noble device*, of all *sorts enchantingly beloved*, and, indeed so much in the *heart of the world*, and especially of *my own people*, . . . that I am altogether misprised." It is jealousy that prompts him to conspire with Charles the Wrestler against Orlando's life. Oliver is fittingly called by Adam "the enemy of all your Orlando's *graces*." The old servant regrets

¹ I. i. 19-20.

² I. i. 161-65.

that Orlando's popularity, of which his charming manners are the cause, should have been his bane ; for he knows of Oliver's plot to burn down the house at night. He cries out in anguish :

" Why are you *virtuous*? Why do people *love* you?

... ..

Know you not, master, to some kind of men
Their *graces*¹ serve them but as enemies? "

One of the attractive features of Orlando is his modesty which reveals itself even in the hour of his victory. Orlando's *goodness* too (called *honesty* by Castiglione) is manifest, and adds to the charm of his personality. Says Castiglione, " They that are best esteemed are for most part very *honest*."

Orlando is marked not only by the softer qualities, but also by the sterner virtues, of the courtier. He is (as Adam says), " *strong, and valiant,*" and is a skilful wrestler. The veteran Charles is no match for him. In the forest of Arden, he kills a lioness single-handed. It is his success in the ring as much as his beauty and charming² personality that wins for him the love of Rosalind.

In the Forest of Arden Orlando is pressed by sheer necessity to disturb the Duke and his

¹ Reference has already been made to Castiglione's views on *grace* in the section on *Love's Labour's Lost*.

² His winning manners are revealed in his conversation with Celia and Rosalind just before the wrestling match in Act I, sc. ii.

party rudely when they are about to commence their meal. The Duke is surprised, and asks,

“ Art thou thus bolden’d, man, by thy distress,
Or else a rude despiser of *good manners*,
That in *civility* thou seem’st so empty? ”

Gentle and courteous as he is, Orlando promptly makes amends, and explains why he had to violate the conventions of *civility* :

“ the thorny point
Of bare distress hath ta’en from me the show
Of smooth *civility* ; yet I am *inland bred*
And know some *nurture*. ”¹

Civility (Latin *urbanitas*) was the virtue commended by the ancient world, and it meant qualities which fitted a man for the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship. It partly supplied the basis of *courtesy* as developed during the Renaissance. In

¹ II. vii. 94-97.

² Criticism of the courtier’s life and courtly fashions appears in treatises of the seventeenth century. Caricatures of the affected gallant, or the fine gentleman “ who hath read the book of good manners,” were to be found in essays and books of character. *The Civil and Uncivil Life* indicates the line of criticism which could be levelled against the fashionable resident of the town. This is reflected to some extent in the witty remarks of Touchstone. Dekker’s satiric piece, *The Guls Horne-Booke* (1609), gives a faithful picture of the man-about-town.

Orlando's speech, however, it especially signifies 'gentle behaviour' which is the product of good breeding or nurture. The word *nurture* is used immediately after in the same speech, and it has reference to the system of discipline devised for the youth by chivalry. Orlando really combines in him the influences of two ideals. Gentleness,¹ or *politeness* which was so highly prized by the chivalric code, appears in him side by side with the intellectual cravings and the sprightly life of the Renaissance, without, however, the gift of repartee and self-assertion which mark the typical courtier. Rosalind is not as courtly as Beatrice. She has not the incisive wit and the strong will which distinguish the latter; nor has she her sharp tongue. Mirthful and humorous, she is yet more or less a pastoral figure, though her manners were learnt in the royal court.

Undoubtedly the finical courtier and the royal court come in for mild satire in *As You Like It*. The Duke moralises on the blessings of sylvan life. This is only natural, as he has obtained peace in the seclusion of the forest where he had to take shelter from the intrigues of the palace. But the connection between courts and culture or manners, is also hinted at in the play. Touchstone is often in a jesting mood; but his remark, " . . . if thou never wast at court, thou never sawest

¹ See *The Merchant of Venice*, II. ii. 194.

good manners," is not absolutely without serious import.¹

Parlour games were a feature of Italian social² life of the sixteenth century, traces of which are to be met with in the *Cortegiano* and other works. In Guazzo's book the game consists in naming a solitary place for retirement with an apt reason for it. In *Euphues and his England* questions are asked after dinner, giving rise to engrossing discussions. In *As You Like It* a reference to this Renaissance pastime is to be noticed in Act I, sc. ii, where Rosalind asks, "What shall be our *sport* then?" Celia replies, "Let us sit and mock the good housewife Fortune."

G. *Twelfth-Night*

The combination of intellectual attainments and grace with noble ancestry³ and courage, reappears in the character of Duke Orsino. Olivia rejects his suit, and yet acknowledges his rare qualities :

" I cannot love him ;
Yet I suppose him *virtuous*, know him *noble*,
Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth ;
In voices well divulg'd, free, *learn'd* and *valiant* ;

¹ III. ii. 39-40.

² T. F. Crane, *Italian Social Customs of the Sixteenth Century*.

³ According to courtesy books, nobility may be inherited, or may be conferred by the sovereign. See *All's Well that Ends Well*, II. iii. 120-60.

And, in *dimension and the shape* of nature
A *gracious* person; but yet I cannot love him." ¹

One aspect of Orsino's personality—his aesthetic sense—is revealed in his love of music.² As Sir Sidney Lee points out, none who had not been influenced by the culture of Renaissance Italy, could say like Duke Orsino :

"If music be the food of love, play on ;
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die."

In early mediaeval times music was regarded as disgraceful and effeminate, except in the case of those trained for priesthood. But opinion and taste changed during the Renaissance, and this change is reflected in Castiglione's book where Count Lewis sharply contradicts Lord Gaspar who expresses the old view. According to Castiglione, "Musicke is not only an ornament, but also necessarie for a courtier." "The tunableness of musick is a verie great refreshing of all worldlye pains and griefes." It "doth not onely make sweete the mindes of men, but also many times wilde beastes tame ; and whoso savoureth it not, a man may assuredly thinke him not to be well in his wits." The Italian author expressly declares, "I am not pleased with the courtier, if he be not also a musition, and, beside his under-

¹ *Twelfth-Night*, I. v. 265-70.

² *Ibid.*, I. i. and II. iv.

standing and cunning upon the booke, haue skil in like manner on sundry instruments." ¹

Italy set the example to the courts of Europe, and the English court from the time of Henry VIII to that of Elizabeth took an active interest in music.² Love of music, as a trace of Italian *courtesy*, is also noticeable in other plays of Shakespeare besides *Twelfth-Night*.

The importance of culture and varied accomplishments as preached by courtesy books, is recognised, though jestingly, even by Sir Andrew Aguecheek, and he seems to have discovered his own defect too late in life. He says regretfully, "I would I had bestowed that time in the *tongues* that I have in fencing, dancing and bear-baiting. O! had I but followed the *arts*!" ³ Yet Sir Toby gives him this certificate: "... he *plays* o' the viol-de-gamboys, and speaks *three or four languages* word for word without book, and hath all the good *gifts of nature*." ⁴

An Italian play, *Gl' Ingannati*,⁵ may have suggested the love adventures of Orsino and Sebastian, and Olivia and Viola in *Twelfth-Night*. But there are sufficient resemblances to these in a

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

² *A Companion to Shakespeare Studies*, p. 138.

³ *Twelfth-Night*, I. iii. 92-95.

⁴ *Ibid.*, I. iii. 26-29.

⁵ See the Appendix to the Variorum Edition of *Twelfth-Night*.

contemporary English tale to justify the conjecture that the latter supplied a large part of the plot of Shakespeare's drama. ' Apolonius and Silla ' in *Riche's Farewell to Militarie Profession*¹ is probably the chief source of the story of *Twelfth-Night*. But the characterisation and the background are Shakespeare's own. In *Gl' Ingannati* Flaminio, the prototype of Shakespeare's Orsino, is " noble, virtuous, elegant, handsome," but he possesses no intellectual attributes. Lattanzio Puccini, who also corresponds to Orsino in Bandello's story suggested by the Italian play, is only " rich in the goods of fortune, and had not yet overpast his one-and-twentieth year." Barnabe Riche alludes to the " graces," " natural allurements," " beauty " and " prowess and valiance " of Apolonius; but his hero has no taste, culture or eloquence associated with Renaissance courtesy. The atmosphere in which these develop is absent from Riche's work, and Orsino and Apolonius are as poles apart. Even *Twelfth-Night* depicts, not Renaissance courtesy in its bloom, but its decadence and, at times, its open violation. Orsino is lacking in a sense of reality, and is deceived by " his own love-in-idleness." Olivia reproaches Sir Toby Belch for his unmannerly behaviour. The ' ungracious wretch ' is only " fit for the mountains and the barbarous

¹ Published in 1581.

caves, where manners ne'er were preach'd." He is a drunken roisterer, Sir Andrew is a brainless braggart, and Malvolio is full of egoistic folly and is lacking in manners. The play is 'a realistic picture of the life of the Renaissance—with its splendour and its joyousness, with its weaknesses and its follies.' "Herein are to be found . . . braggadocios, and chicken-hearted simpletons . . . ill-conditioned hypocrisy and intolerance . . . and mad pranks."

G. *Troilus and Cressida*

A slight, though unmistakable, trace of the ideal of Renaissance courtesy may be noticed in *Troilus and Cressida*. In Act I, scene ii, Pandarus tries to divert Cressida's love to Troilus by extolling him and attributing to him most of the virtues of the Renaissance courtier—wit, valour, beauty, learning, etc. He begins by comparing this Prince with Hector :

Pandarus. No, Hector is not a better man than Troilus.

Cressida. Excuse me.

Pandarus. He is elder.

Cressida. Pardon me, pardon me.

Pandarus. Th'other's not come to 't ; you shall tell me another tale when the other's come to't. Hector shall not have his *wit* this year.

Cressida. He shall not need it if he have his own.

Pandarus. Nor his *qualities*.

Cressida. No matter,

Pandarus. Nor his *beauty*.

Cressida. 'Twould not become him ; his own's better.

Since Cressida is obdurate, Pandarus tries to change her opinion by comparing Troilus with other Trojan heroes as they pass over the stage. But Cressida's opinion of Pandarus's favourite remains unchanged. Exasperated with fruitless efforts, the emissary at last bursts out :

" Why, have you any discretion? have you any eyes? Do you know what a man is? Is not *birth, beauty, good shape, discourse, manhood, learning, gentleness, virtue, youth, liberality*, and so forth, the spice and salt that season a man? "

The portrait intended to be drawn is undoubtedly that of the courtier, the hero of Renaissance Italy.

Though Shakespeare may have used an old play in his *Troilus and Cressida*,¹ Caxton's *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troy* and Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* are believed to have been some of its principal sources. The Troilus and Cressida legend, it has been pointed out, is not of classical origin. It had its germ in the writings of two authors of the Latin decadence, and was " developed by a Norman trouvère . . . who may be styled its true creator." This is probably the reason why it has a mediaeval background. In Chaucer's poem Troilus's character is suffused with some of the softer chivalric virtues. Here Troilus is, as already

¹ See *MLN*, Vol. 45, p. 144.

noted, gentle as a lamb, though valiant as a lion. He is handsome, sincere and wise, but it is his humility and modesty that are specially emphasised by the poet. The prince is "goode, wise, worthy, fresshe, and free." Chaucer points out, "How sobreliche he caste doun his yen" when people give him an ovation on his return from battle. Criseyde treasures up

" Within her thought his excellent *prowésse*,
And his *estat*, and also his *renoun*,
His *wit*, his *shap*, and ek his *gentillesse*—" ¹

Gentleness and humility of the chivalric code had their roots in the teachings of Christianity. They are distinguishable from intellectual and social virtues—*learning*, *discourse*, *liberality*, etc.—with which Shakespeare endows his Troilus.

H. *Hamlet*

If its sources were to give any indication, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* ² should have been a typical revenge ³ play, and, in the end, Hamlet should have waded through the blood of his uncle to the throne; for this is exactly what happened

¹ Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*.

² References are to the Oxford Edition of *Hamlet* except where extracts are given from the two Quartos.

³ See "Theories of Revenge in Renaissance England" in *MPhil*, Vol. 28, p. 281.



in the source-books. Neither the old myths and legends which have been so closely examined,¹ nor the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus (*Historia Danica*), nor even Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*² would lead the reader to expect a drama with a unique appeal like the tragedy of the Prince of Denmark. This appeal is due to the personality of the Prince, and is without a parallel in Elizabethan tragedy. If Shakespeare had been only a Senecan, *Hamlet*, having its sources in Saxo and Belleforest, would have been a mere pseudo-classical tragedy. Sententious speeches would have been more important than action, and horror and bloodshed would have been its main *motifs*. If, again, contemporary Italian novels had obsessed Shakespeare, machinations of villains, secret poisoning, treachery and betrayal would have been its most noticeable features. But as it is, in Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*'s personality—in its strength and in its weakness—stands out above its other attractions.

¹ See Sir Israel Gollancz, *The Sources of Hamlet and Hamlet in Iceland*.

² Belleforest's book was published in 1570. The only extant English version of its story of Hamlet, entitled *The Hystorie of Hamblet*, is dated 1608, but there might have been an earlier version now lost. *The Hystorie* itself, as published in 1608, shows the influence of Shakespeare's play, and the dramatist could only have consulted either the earlier version or the French original.

None of the revenge plays which resemble *Hamlet* and which apparently left their impress on it, has such an appeal based on the character of its hero. *The Spanish Tragedy*¹ of Kyd and Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*² (Second Part) have points of similarity with Shakespeare's tragedy. Antonio who is pressed for revenge by the ghost of his father Andrugio (in *Antonio's Revenge*, the second part of *Antonio and Mellida*), reminds one of Hamlet. Like the latter, Hieronimo feigns madness, procrastinates and delays revenge, is overwhelmed with grief and loses all interest in life, is somewhat of a writer, arranges a dramatic entertainment, gives directions to the players and discourses on comedy and tragedy. He meets his end in avenging the murder of his son, as Hamlet died in his effort to avenge his father's murder. Even the Duke in *Malcontent*, who in his mad humour speaks poignant truths, has a resemblance to Hamlet. Yet the personality of the Prince differentiates Shakespeare's play from all these, and has raised it to quite a different plane of literary creation. None of even Shakespeare's own heroes is comparable with the Prince, though some have

¹ Some call this the real source of *Hamlet*.

² Its influence on Shakespeare's tragedy is very probable. Prof. Dover Wilson, however, thinks that there is no proof of the priority of *Antonio's Revenge*. See *What Happens in Hamlet*, p. 55, footnote.

been supposed to be his reflections, however dim these may be.¹

Hamlet's personality, on which depends the appeal of the drama, owes a good deal to the Renaissance ideal of culture. This is partly suggested by a comparison of Hamlet in the First Quarto with Saxo's Amleth and Belleforest's Hamblet. Though it may have been a piratical publication, "partly derived from notes taken in the theatre, partly from memory, and a hack writer may have tried to fill up the blanks, or ventured upon some independent writing of his own,"² Q. 1 reveals the character of the Prince as almost fully conceived.

He does not resemble Amleth ; but it would be futile to look in the work of Saxo for ideals of excellence which were inconceivable in his age. Belleforest's work belonged to the sixteenth century. It followed Saxo's, but it made the Prince and his temptress lovers, and mentioned his "over-great melancholy." Shakespeare improves upon Belleforest by endowing his hero with a finer spirit.

¹ "There is more than one tentative at Hamlet in earlier work. Facets of him show already in Romeo and Richard II ; Jaques is 'the melancholy man' derided ; and in Brutus, the sensitive philosopher misgivingly impelled to action, the likeness is distinct." (H. Granville-Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare, Third Series*, p. 10.)

² E. Dowden, Introduction to the Oxford Edition of *Hamlet*.

Hamlet's melancholy is the outcome of a sensitive soul to which Hamblet was a stranger. Renaissance amorists regarded love as the mark of cultured life. It is the subject of discussion in numerous courtesy books, and the theme of the impassioned speech of Bembo in Bk. IV of the *Cortegiano*. "I lou'de Ofelia as deere as twenty brothers could," declares Hamlet to Laertes on the burial-ground (Q. 1). This noble love is to be contrasted with the gross passion of the primitive Prince (as referred to by Saxo as well as by Belleforest), and is set in relief against the dark background of the Queen's adultery and incestuous marriage. The brutal speeches of Hamlet to Ophelia, prompted by his mother's misconduct, again bring out his conception of true love.

Saxo's Amleth, as much as Belleforest's Hamblet, is a cruel and unscrupulous prince stung by the thought that he has been deprived of his rightful inheritance by the wicked usurpation of his uncle, and Amleth's chief object, like Hamblet's, is to regain the throne. If this involves the punishment of the King for seduction, it has to be inflicted. But the throne is his main objective. In the First Quarto, however, Hamlet is at first too much upset by his father's death and his mother's incestuous marriage to think calmly of anything else, though he is not insensible to the loss of throne. After he comes to know of his uncle's guilt, his urge for revenge is given more prominence by

Shakespeare than his ambition, though Claudius suspects that this is at the root of his 'antic disposition.' Hamlet's desire for punishing Claudius is traceable not really¹ to his resentment against usurpation, but to the revelation by the Ghost of the secret murder and adultery.² Hamlet is thus less greedy and less sordid than Amleth and Hamblet. In Saxo's work Amleth deliberately feigns madness to achieve his end. In Belleforest's *Hystorie of Hamblet*, Hamblet frankly says, "Seeing that by force I cannot effect my desire, reason alloweth me by dissimulation, subtilitie and secret practises to proceed therein." But Hamlet's insanity is not wholly feigned; his sensitive soul has really been unhinged. "All the differences of motive between Shakespeare and Saxo depend on their different conceptions of the Prince's character: Amleth (like Hamblet) being quite sane and quite resolute, Hamlet neither."³ Amleth waits for his chance, and when it comes, he cruelly burns down the whole palace with all its inmates, though his uncle is not there—only to weaken his support. He next kills him and mounts the throne. In the First Quarto Hamlet

¹ See J. Dover Wilson *What Happens in Hamlet*, pp. 45, 122.

² See "Theories of Revenge in Renaissance England" in *MPhil*, Vol. 28, p. 293.

³ Introduction to O. Elton's *First Nine Books of the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus*.

once checks the temptation to kill the King when he is at prayer. Whatever may have been his reasons, he has already made up his mind not to take any step against him without confirmation of the Ghost's story. This means putting off his opportunity of mounting the throne, and actually his tragic end deprives him of it altogether. The mental attitude of Hamlet is what Castiglione would call *honesty*. He says, " . . . as the minde is much more worthie than the body, so deserveth it also to be better decked and polished. And how that ought to be in our courtier (leaving apart the precepts of so manie wise philosophers that write in this matter, and define the virtues of the mind . . .) we will expresse in fewe wordes, applying to our purpose, that it is sufficient he bee an *honest man and well meaning* : for in this is comprehended the goodnesse, the wisdom, the manlinesse and temperance of the mind, and all other qualities that belong to so worthie a name." ¹ Contrasting Hamlet's irresolution with Laertes's brilliant impetuosity, Prof. Dover Wilson remarks, " In the sphere of action Laertes puts him utterly to shame. But decision and determination do not make 'character,' though the world thinks so. There is also *nobility and generosity, honour and integrity of soul*, and in this sphere Hamlet shines 'like a star i'th'darkest night' against the base iniquity of his opponents." ²

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

² *What Happens in Hamlet*, pp. 275-76.

Neither Hamblet nor Amleth possesses any of the other qualifications which mark out Hamlet. The latter is, as Ophelia says, at the same time a *Courtier, Scholler, Souldier*. A student of Philosophy in the University of Wittenberg, a skilled swordsman and an accomplished youth, he would be an ornament of any court. He is, in the true sense of the term, a scholar-gentleman. The stress on scholarship in a soldierly prince reveals the influence of Italian courtesy. Says Castiglione, "Beside goodnesse the true and principall ornament of the minde in every man (I believe) are *letters*." "I returne againe unto our courtier, whom in *letters* I will have to be more than indifferently well seene, at the least in those studies which they call *Humanitie*." Again, "Neither should I want the examples of so many excellent *Captaines* of old time, which all joyned the ornament of *letters* with prowesse of *armes*."

Hamlet's charming personality might conceivably have been borrowed from the hero of Kyd's *Hamlet*. If this old play which Shakespeare is supposed to have had before him when preparing his first draft had not been lost,¹ his obligation² in this respect to Kyd, if any, could have been established. As it is, it must be a matter of

¹ Dr. Boas thinks that he had consulted not the 'Ur-Hamlet,' but a popularized stage version of it.

² On his possible debt to Kyd's *Hamlet*, see *PMLA*, Vol. 48, p. 777.

conjecture. From what is known of Kyd, it seems unlikely that he should have had any conception of all-round human excellence and charm of character which form the basis of Renaissance courtesy, and probably his hero delighted only in bloodshed and revenge. If, as the Cambridge editors suggest, some portions of the old play "are still preserved in the Quarto of 1603," they cannot possibly have anything to do with those attributes of Hamlet which have made him such a charming figure. Probably Kyd followed in detail the revenge story of Saxo with only such modifications as were suggested by contemporary dramatic taste.

Hamlet's ¹ portrait in Q. 1 is retouched in Q. 2. There are undoubtedly in the latter a more profound contemplativeness and a greater dramatic propriety in the Prince's character. For example, his scepticism and hesitancy, just noticeable in the First Quarto, intensify in the Second, while theological doubt is suggested as the reason for this.

¹ Q. 1 is regarded by Dr. Boas as Shakespeare's first draft, and Q. 2 as an improvement on it. Others, however, look upon the former as the mutilated and piratical version of the real first draft. This, it is believed, was revised by Shakespeare in Q. 2 and "enlarged to almost as much againe as it was." The "true and perfect coppie" was not, it is suggested, published at all. Even if the second view is correct, the observations made here are not much affected. See, however, Prof. Dover Wilson's Introduction to *Hamlet*, pp. xxv-xxvii.

Being about half the size of the Second Quarto, the First contains only in an abbreviated form those ' passages of mingled philosophy and imaginative eloquence ' which, elaborated in the Second, give the drama its distinguishing note. The personality of Hamlet, too, has been made more impressive in the Second Quarto, and more attractive to the modern reader. This modification of the original conception has largely been suggested by the Renaissance ideal of the courtier.

For example, Claudius's description of Hamlet as " our chiefest courtier " occurs for the first time in Q. 2. In Q. 1, he is only " our coosin and dearest Sonne," " a most louing Sonne," " princely Sonne Hamlet." His tribute to Hamlet's nobility of soul, of which the King is eager to take advantage in his conspiracy with Laertes, is sincere and well-deserved :

" Most generous and free from all contriuing."

This too is introduced for the first time in Q. 2. Hamlet's goodness shines forth in his behaviour to Laertes in the last portion of Q. 2. " That is Laertes, a *very noble youth*," he exclaims to Horatio, as he notices him in the funeral procession. This line does not occur in Q. 1. Again, his apologies to his opponent before they fight are fuller and more sincere in Q. 2 than in Q. 1. Hamlet's intellectual attainments, fostered no doubt by his residence at the University,

are revealed in his depth of insight and literary taste. He is interested in dramatic performances, and in both the Quartos mention is made of the 'delight' he takes in "the Tragedians of the Citty." It may be that this is a reflection of the vogue in high life in Elizabethan times. But Hamlet is also apt at literary work, and can possibly write plays—at any rate, he composes a 'speech' to be inserted at the appropriate place in *The Murder of Gonzago*. Castiglione states, "There arose . . . from time to time, not onely in Tuskane, but in all Italy, among gentlemen brought up in Court, in armes and in letters, some studie, to speake and to write more finely than they did in that first rude age, when the turmoile of the miseries that rose through barbarous nations, was not as yet quieted." The four lines of verse in Hamlet's letter to Ophelia were certainly his own composition. The poems recited in the Quartos by the Prince now and then may in some cases be traceable to old songs or popular¹ ballads, but obviously they were intended to appear as his own improvisation. Even as originally conceived, Hamlet had thus a poetic temperament, but in Q. 2 it is expressly mentioned that he had the making of a poet. The verses recited after the performance of the play and hasty retirement

¹ Dyce thinks two of the poems recited by Hamlet in Q. 2 to be quotations. Collier is of the same opinion about another.

of the King, led Horatio to remark to the Prince, "You might haue rym'd." Cultured men, according to Castiglione, were expected to have some facility in writing verses. He says, "Let him (the courtier) much exercise himself in Poets, . . . and also in *writing both rime and prose*, and especially in this our vulgar tongue."

Oratory was looked upon as a great accomplishment in the classical age. Its revival was only to be expected during the Renaissance, and the art of speaking with proper pronunciation, pause, emphasis, etc., and without gesticulation, is, therefore, mentioned by Castiglione as a valued asset in a courtier. The gifts necessary in a good speaker are "a good voice, not too subtill or soft, as in a woman: nor yet so boisterous and rough, as in one of the countrie, but *shril, cleare, sweete* and well framed with a *prompt pronunciation*, and *with fit maners and gestures* which (in my minde) consist in certaine motions of all the bodie, not affected nor forced, but tempred with a manerly countenance and with a moving of the eyes that may give a *grace and accorde with the wordes*, and (as much as he can) signifie also *with gestures*, the intent and affection of the speaker."¹ Says Guazzo, "It is much in my opinion to keepe a certain *majestie in the gesture*, which speaketh as

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. I. Ascham's *Toxophilus* also points out the value of "tongue and voyce, able to persuade all men."

it were by using silence and constraineth as it were by way of commandment the hearers to hear in admiration and reverence. Yet herein is required such a *moderation*, that a man with too little be *not immovable like an image*, neither *with too much, too busie like an ape*—the *pronunciation be neither too swift nor too slow* . . . And therefore we must speake freely, without supping up our words . . . We must likewise take heed we speak *not out of the throate*, like one that hath some meate in his mouth, which is too hotte . . . Lastly, *the voyce* must be neither fainte like one that is sicke . . . *neither shrill nor loud* like a crier . . . One should avoid a playerlike kinde of *lightness*, whereby he getteth discommendation . . . and see *the woordes agree to the gesture*''¹

The influence of admonitions like these may be traced in Q. 1 of *Hamlet* in the Prince's advice to the players :

“ *Pronounce* me this speech trippingly a the tongue
as I taught thee,
Mary and you mouth it. as a many of your players do
I'de rather heare a towne bull bellow,
Then such a fellow speake my lines.
Nor do not *saw the aire* thus with your hands,
But giue euery thing his *action with temperance*
O it offends mee to the soule. to heare a
rebustious periwig fellow,

¹ S. Guazzo, *Civil Conversation*, Bk. III, tr. G. Pettie.

To teare a passion in totters, into very ragges,
 To split the eares of the ignorant, who for the
 Most parte are capable of nothing but dumbe shewes
and noises,
 I would haue such a fellow whipt, for o're doing,
tarmagant
 It out, Herodes Herod."

Defects in pronunciation and voice, and mannerism are here mainly referred to. In a few other lines there is a fling at over-acting one's part and jesting. In Q. 2 several fresh lines are introduced, specially emphasising the importance of appropriate and natural gesture: ". . . let your owne discretion be your tutor; sute the action to the word, the word to the action, with this speciall obseruance, that you ore-steppe not the modestie of nature; For anything so ore-doone, is from the purpose of playing, whose end, . . . was and is, to holde as 'twere the Mirrour up to Nature." The ideal of elocution as set out by the ancients and the Italian authors is made more distinct in this passage. It is not exclusively a comment on contemporary acting.

Italian courtesy includes love of fine arts like music, sculpture and painting. There is a lengthy discussion in *The Courtier* on the relative value of painting and sculpture. Painting includes drawing which is important for military purposes. This enables officers to prepare plans of the enemy's fortifications, etc. The brush and the canvas, however, help people to appreciate the beauty of human

form, its symmetry and proportion—"the beautie of lively bodies, and not onely in the sweetnesse of the *Phisiognomie*, but *in the proportion* of all the rest, as well in men as other living creatures."¹ Hamlet's reference to the portraits of his father and his uncle in Q. 1 shows how keen his appreciation of human form and "phisiognomie" is:

See here a face, to outface Mars himselfe,
An eye, at which his foes did tremble at,
A front wherein all vertues are set downe
For to adorne a king, and guild his crowne, . . .
Looke you now, here is your husband,
With a face like Vulcan.
A looke fit for a murder and a rape,
A dull dead hanging looke, and a hell-bred eie—

The alterations in the passage in Q. 2 suggest a keener sense of the beauty of human form in the Prince in consonance with his more attractive personality in it. "Grace" (as distinct from *form*) is mentioned by Pico² and Castiglione as well as by other Italian writers on courtesy as the undefined source of beauty, and Hamlet thus harangues his mother:

"See what a *grace* was seated on this browe,
Hiperions curls, the front of *Love* himselfe,
An eye like *Mars*, to threaten and command,
A station like the herald *Mercury*,

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

² See *A Platonick Discourse upon Love*, commentary on stanzas 6-8.

New lighted on a heaue, a kissing hill,
 A *combination* and a *forme* indeede,
 Where euery God did seeme to set his seale
 To giue the world assurance of a man."

What distinguishes painting from sculpture is the use of colour which provides a veritable feast for the eye. Castiglione rapturously describes the firmament itself as a beautiful painting—"the ensigne of the world that we behold with a large skye, so bright with *shining* starres, and in the midst, the earth, environed with the seas, severed in partes with hilles, dales, and rivers, and so decked with such diuers *trees*, beautifull *flowers and herbes*, a man may say it to be a noble and *great painting*, drawne with the hand of nature and of God."¹ Delight in the perception of colour and pictorial sense underlying this passage, may be paralleled by those revealed in Hamlet's famous speech to his schoolmates in Q. 2 which, curiously enough, is almost similarly phrased, and which is one of the finest prose pieces ever written by Shakespeare—"this goodly frame the earth, seemes to mee a sterill promontorie; this most excellent Canopie the ayre, looke you, this braue orehanging firmament, this maiesticall roofe fretted with golden fire, why it appeareth nothing to me but a foule and pestilent congregation of vapoures." In Q. 1 the corresponding

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. 1.

passage is shorter (barely four lines), and has hardly any aesthetic significance unconnected with the trend of the dialogue :

“—this great world you see contents me not,
No nor the spangled heauens, nor earth, nor sea,
No nor Man that is so glorious a creature,
Contents not me, no nor woman too—”

Fencing was largely practised as a form of physical exercise in Renaissance Italy. Skill in it was also regarded as an accomplishment in the *courtier*. Castiglione would expect every gentleman “to have understanding in all exercises of the bodie that belong to a man of warre.” He says, “Herein I thinke the chiefe point is to handle wel *all kinde of weapon*. . . . And specially to bee skilfull on those weapons that *are used ordinarily among Gentlemen*.” The reason given is the possible need of fighting duels. “There happen oftentimes variances betweene one gentleman and an other, whereupon ensueth a combat. And many times it shall stand him in steade to use the weapon that he hath at that instant by his side, therefore it is a very sure thing to be skilfull.”¹ Italy’s influence is to be seen in the growth of a special literature on duelling in England. “Material from Muzio’s *Il duello* appeared in an unacknowledged translation as *Vincentio Saviolo his Practice*. The second book of this was in turn abridged as

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

The Booke of Honour and Armes (1590).”¹ England’s obligation to Italy is further noticeable in the type of weapons which latterly came to be used in duels. Rapier and dagger were the two Italian weapons which, in the sixteenth century, replaced English national weapons like the sword and the axe.² Prof. Dover Wilson mentions that at the time when *Hamlet* was staged, three varieties of sword-play were possible—“sword-and-buckler play, the old English fashion of fighting with the short broadsword in one hand and a light target in the other; single rapier-play . . . ; and thirdly, rapier-and-dagger play. . . . At the end of the sixteenth century English methods had given place with persons of fashion to the rapier-play imported from abroad, and the sword-and-buckler men were regarded as out-of-date. . . . Single rapier, moreover, was less favoured at the moment than rapier-and-dagger.”³

That proficiency in fencing was recognised as a courtly accomplishment in Elizabethan times, is more clearly brought out in Q. 2 than in Q. 1.

¹ *Gentlefolk in the Making*, p. 49.

² Ruth Kelso, *The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century*. See also Sir Humphrey Gilbert, *Queene Elizabethes Achademy*.

³ *What Happens in Hamlet*, pp. 279-80. To Hamlet’s question Osric replies that “rapier and dagger” were the weapons used by Laertes in duels.

The report of popular admiration for Laertes's swordsmanship, briefly referred to in Q. 1 by Claudius as "some praise," is expanded in Q. 2, and Lamord's tribute is added. The "Courtier" in Q. 2 who is sent as an emissary by the King to lure Hamlet to the fencing match (called Osric in the Folio, Ostricke or Osrick in Q. 2 being the name of a man asked to give the foils to the duellists), has really no prototype in Q. 1. "The Bragart Gentleman" is not really a tactful tempter, and may be said to correspond partly to the Lord in Q. 2 who comes to summon Hamlet to "attend him (King) in the hall." Though just a sentence or two concerning the wager (included in Q. 2 in the speeches of the "Courtier") is put into his mouth, he does not "praise the excellence of Laertes with his weapon" to excite the envy of the Prince. Claudius's promise to Laertes in Q. 1 :—

. . . wee'le put on you
Such a report of singularitie,
Will bring him on, although against his will . . .

—is not fulfilled. The plan materialises in Q. 2. The "Courtier" here praises Laertes, "newly com to Court," as "an absolute gentleman, ful of most excellent differences, of very soft society, . . . the card or kalender of gentry, . . . the continent of what part a Gentleman would see." This encomium and the ascription of perfect swordsmanship in which "hee's unfellowed," show the value

attached in Q. 2 fencing as an accomplishment of the "gentleman."

In Q. 1 the match is briefly described, and is a comparatively tame affair. In Q. 2 the circumstances are showy, and the stage-setting is more attractive. The King makes a pompous speech, and 'drinkes to Hamlet' as the play begins to the sound of trumpets. When Hamlet wins the first bout, trumpets blow again, drums sound, Claudius drinks to his health (for the second time) and the cannon is fired in his honour. This was certainly "the most thrilling climax to the most thrilling play of all time."

As for Hamlet, his own fondness for swordsmanship and his skill in it are better revealed in Q. 2. The King emphasises here, but not in Q. 1, how the Prince grew *envious* of Laertes when Lamord described the latter's excellence as a fencer. When Horatio hints in Q. 2 that he might "loose" the wager, Hamlet replies, "I doe not thinke so, since he went into France, I haue bene in continuall practise, I shall winne at the ods." The King in Q. 2 expresses his confidence in the ultimate victory of Hamlet over the reputed Laertes when he has seen the Prince's performance with his own eyes for a while. After the second bout he cries, "Our sonne shall winne." This may be "well-simulated glee," but Hamlet's scoring suggests it. Laertes's "poisoned

sharp " has not yet been able to touch Hamlet, and when Laertes tells the King, " My Lord, Ile hit him now," the latter " doubts his capacity to pass Hamlet's guard," and rejoins gloomily, " I doe not think't."

Sprezzatura (i.e., easy, nonchalant, careless manner) is commended by Castiglione as a high accomplishment. It consists in one's doing things with unconscious facility and without any appearance of exertion. Castiglione wants to have " our courtier a *perfect* horseman for everie saddle."¹ He notices the awkward horsemanship of the Venetians who, being islanders, had little opportunity of riding, and contrasts it with his own ideal of the art. " Marke what an ill grace a man at Armes hath, when he enforceth him selfe to goe so bolt upright, settled in saddle (as we use to say after the Venetian phrase) in comparison of an other that *appeareth not to minde it*, and sitteth on horsebacke so nimbly and close as though hee were on foote." Claudius's praise of Lamord's horsemanship is something adventitious in the play, but the passage containing it has remarkable similarity of idea and phrasing with the above extract from *The Courtier* :

" —this gallant
Had witchcraft in't, he grew vnto his seate,
And to such wondrous dooing brought his horse,

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

As had he beene incorp'st, and demy natur'd
With the braue beast.”¹

This passage is new in Q. 2, as is another just preceding it :

“—youth no lesse becomes
The *light and carelesse liuery* that it weares
Then settled age, his *sables*, and his *weedes*. . . .”

Hamlet's brilliant wit easily attracts attention. Wit was not a prominent characteristic of the *wise man* of Greece or of the Roman *orator*. But it was counted an accomplishment in Renaissance Italy. Castiglione says that the courtier “shall never want good communication and fitte for them hee talketh withall, and have a good understanding, with a certaine sweetnesse to refresh the hearers minds, and with *merry conceites and jestes* to provoke them to solace and *laughter*, so that without being at any time lothsome or satiate, he may evermore delite.”² The Italian author is here referring to pleasant humour which is the salt of conversation. This is only to be expected in a normal person, not in a youth of abnormal, almost pathological, mental condition, living under the shadow of a calamity. Hamlet's gloom and bitter cynicism find expression in mordant wit. Saxo's

¹ *The Perfection of Horsemanship* by Morgan was intended to encourage riding. See *Cambridge History of English Literature*, IV, 540.

² *The Courtier*, Bk. II.

Amleth, like Belleforest's Hamblet, may come in for comparison with the Prince, for there is some superficial resemblance between them in this respect. But really Amleth is wordy and ambiguous, without the intellectual depth out of which humour or wit springs. It has been remarked that "Saxo makes him (Amleth) not only long-headed and *full of equivocation, but punctilious of verbal truthfulness.*" He has no occasion to speak except on matters connected with his own activities which are meant to fulfil his revenge, and his equivocation is meant to screen him against the King's spies. Hamlet's character is many-sided, he speaks on numerous subjects, and there is full scope for his wit and verbal subtlety.¹ They are, however, more manifest in Q. 2 than in Q. 1. Undoubtedly Hamlet too indulges in *equivocation*, especially in his talks with Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern; but his wit is generally independent of it, and is Shakespeare's own contribution. It takes the form of what Castiglione would call "Sayinges" or "Privie tauntes." These are often "verie briefe,

¹ "None of Shakespeare's heroes is so *vivacious and nimble in wit, thought or tongue*; by his feigned madness, he later enlarges his scope." (E. E. Stoll, *Hamlet the Man*, p. 7.) Says Prof. Dover Wilson. "Imagine Hamlet without it (pretended madness), and most of the wit together with all the fun . . . would be lost." (*What Happens in Hamlet*, p. 95.)

and consist onely in *quicke and subtill sayinges*, as many times there are heard among us, and in *nickes* : neither doth it appeare that they are of any grace, without some litle *byting*." ¹ When Ophelia corrects him and says that his father died four months ago, Hamlet promptly remarks, "O heauens, die two months agoe, and not forgotten yet. . . ." Hamlet is specially good at repartee. It is this that marks him out while he wants to remain unnoticed. Polonius first concludes from this that there is a method in his madness and wonders "how pregnant sometimes his replies are, a happines that often madnesse hits on, which reason and sanctity ² could not so prosperously be deliuered of." The speech of the player being described by Polonius as too lengthy, swift comes the retort of Hamlet : "It shall to the barbers with your beard." When the Queen calls the killing of Polonius a bloody deed, Hamlet hits back :

" —almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a King, and marry with his brother."

The King asks :

" How is it that the clowdes still hang on you !"

Hamlet replies :

" Not so much my Lord, I am too much in the sonne."

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. II.

² *Sanity* is the Folio reading in place of *sanctity*. The quotation is from the Second Quarto.

Guildestern informs Hamlet that the King "is in his retirement meruilous distempred."

Hamlet. With drinke Sir ?

Guildestern. No my Lord, with choller.

Hamlet. Your wisdom should shewe itselfe more richer to signifie this to the Doctor ; for, for mee to put him to his purgation, would perhaps plunge him into more choller.

Hamlet is fond of punning, too. A few examples may be cited :

Pol. I did enact Iulius Cæsar, I was kild i'the Capitall. *Brutus* kild mee.

Hamlet. It was a *brute* part of him to kill so capitall a calfe there.

When Hamlet asks Guildestern to play on the pipe, and he pleads his inability, the Prince thus twits him : " You would *play* vpon mee, you would seeme to know my *stops*."

Many of such specimens of the Prince's wit in Q. 2 do not occur in Q. 1. Mention may also be made of the brevity of Polonius's estimate, in Q. 1, of Hamlet's shrewdness—" How pregnant his replies are, and full of wit." In Q. 2 Polonius's praise of it is more copious. An apt reflection of the Lord Chamberlain, which has passed into a proverb—" Though this be madnesse, yet there is method in't "—does not occur in Q. 1 at all. It may, however, be noted that verbal punning is rarer in *Hamlet* than in some of the earlier plays of Shakespeare, e.g., *Love's Labour's Lost*, and

in Elizabethan literature under the influence of Euphuism.

A courtier, according to Castiglione, should possess qualities which spontaneously win the affection of common people. "By virtue of his many qualities, he getteth him a *reputation*, especially among the multitude, unto whom a man must sometime apply himself."¹ Hamlet is a more popular figure in Q. 2 than in Q. 1. In the former Claudius tells Laertes frankly that one of the reasons why he could not publicly proceed against the Prince was

—the great loue the generall gender beare him,
Who, dipping all his faults in theyr affection.
Worke like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Conuert his Giues to graces.

This passage does not occur in Q. 1, and nothing can be traced either in Saxo or in Belleforest which might remotely suggest it.

But apart from this blind love, the people felt real admiration for his manners and courtesy which were held up as worthy of emulation. This is more emphasised in Q. 2 than in Q. 1. Ophelia's famous estimate of the Prince is much shorter and less glowing in Q. 1 than in Q. 2. As against

The Courtier, Scholler, Souldier, all in him,
All dasht and splinterd thence, O woe is me,

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

in Q. 1, Q. 2 has

O what a noble mind is heere orethrowne !
The Courtiers, souldiers, schollers, eye, tongue,
sword,
Th' expectation, and Rose of the faire state,
The glasse of fashion, and the mould of forme,
Th' obseru'd of all obseruers, quite quite downe . .
That vnmatcht forme. and stature of blowne youth
Blasted with extacie,—

These lines, along with the King's speech to Laertes, have certainly the effect of modifying Shakespeare's original conception of the personality of the Prince as revealed in Q. 1. The finished portrait of Hamlet has a unique attraction. "What makes him more popular than Shakespeare's other heroes is partly his *personal charm*, his flexibility and *familiarity*, his complexity of nature and simplicity of manner."¹

The exalted Renaissance notion of friendship has its influence in *Hamlet*. Castiglione thinks that a Courtier cannot do without this virtue: " . . . without this perfect friendship men were much more unluckie than all other living creatures."² Undoubtedly one of the delightful points of *Hamlet* with its gruesome and revolting features—treachery, espionage, lust and bloodshed—is the bond of friendship between the Prince and Horatio. Saxo mentions a foster-brother of Amleth, and

¹ E. E. Stoll, *Hamlet the Man*, p. 7.

² *The Courtier*, Bk. I.

Belleforest mentions a youth nourished with Hamlet in his father's time, who just warned the Prince of the King's plot to tempt him through a girl. The transmutation of this informant into Horatio reveals the influence of Renaissance courtesy. Friendship exists only between people of like nature. Hence the informant of the stories develops into Hamlet's fellow-student in the university, capable of sharing his thoughts and feelings, and brave, sceptical, generous and noble like him. There is indeed some obvious difference between their characters, and this is why Horatio is a foil to Hamlet.

Horatio, the friend of Hamlet, is seen to better advantage in Q. 2. The magnificent lines in which the Prince expresses his own estimate and sincere appreciation of Horatio's character, occur only in Q. 2.¹ Again, Horatio's appreciation of Hamlet's love and confidence is recorded in two

¹ Since my deare soule was mistris of her choice,
And could of men distinguish her election,
S'hath seald thee for herselfe, for thou hast been
As one in suffring all that suffers nothing,
A man that Fortunes buffets and rewards
Hast tane with equall thanks ; and blest are those
Whose blood and judgement are so well comedled,
That they are not a pype for Fortunes finger
To sound what stop she please : giue me that man
That is not passions slaue, and I will weare him
In my harts core, I in my hart of hart
As I doe thee.

lines which appear for the first time in Q. 2 :

I doe not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted. If not from Lord Hamlet.

Though Hamlet's personality has been suffused with the idealism of Italian *courtesy*, and though it has been suggested that there was actually an Italian prince who was Shakespeare's model,¹ the Prince of Denmark never strikes the reader as exotic. He is nothing if not an Elizabethan, thanks to the extraordinary assimilation of Italian culture in Shakespeare's England. Prof. Dover Wilson observes, "To the Elizabethans, Macbeth was a barbarian Scot belonging to the remote past, Lear's figure was somewhat dimly seen through the mists of early Britain, Othello was a Moor, but Hamlet was one of themselves—a young nobleman of Elizabeth's court." So true is this that the glaring inconsistency between the character of the Prince and his surroundings has called forth the remark, "Shakespeare could not make a psychologically or otherwise consistent play out of a plot which retained a strictly barbaric action, while the hero was transformed into a super-subtle Elizabethan."²

¹ See *MLR*, Vol. 30, p. 433 and Prof. Dover Wilson's Introduction to *Hamlet*, p. xxiii.

² J. M. Robertson, *The Problem of Hamlet*, p. 74.

I. *Othello*

In *Othello* it is the character of Desdemona, not that of the Moor, that shows the influence of courtesy. Book III of the *Cortegiano* describes the education and the training which a “gentlewoman of the court” should have.¹ These are reflected in the portrait of Desdemona, and the reflection grows distinct when she is seen side by side with her prototype in the Italian novel.

Giraldi Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* is the source of *Othello*, but it had not been translated into English in Shakespeare's days. It is therefore conjectured that Shakespeare consulted it in the original Italian or in the French version of G. Chappuys (1584). It has, however, been suggested that there was possibly an English translation which was used by Shakespeare, but has since been lost. In Cinthio, the lady is only “a virtuous woman of great beauty,”² but is not endowed with any other qualities. In Shakespeare Desdemona is *educated*, and feels grateful to her father for her culture. “To you I am bound for life and *education*,” she tells Brabantio. *Othello* lays stress on her up-bringing, when, prior to his departure for

¹ These have been discussed in the section on *Much Ado About Nothing*.

² “Una virtuosa donna di maravigliosa bellezza.”

Cyprus, he asks the Duke for

“ fit disposition for my wife,
Due reference of place and exhibition,
With such accommodation and besort
As levels with her *breeding*.” ¹

She is also

“ —*fair*, feeds well, loves company,
Is *free of speech*, *sings*, *plays*, and *dances* well.” ²

She takes part in parlour games in which the high-bred Italian lady of the sixteenth century³ used to spend her leisure. Pending the arrival of Othello whom she had preceded to Cyprus, Desdemona whiles away her time in this kind of wordy recreation with Iago and Cassio, which shows her capacity for graceful and witty speech. She is really “ *fair and wise, fairness and wit*.” Her brilliant accomplishments unfortunately make her supposed offences appear all the more hideous to her jealous husband who bitterly exclaims :

“ So *delicate* with her needle ! An admirable *musician* ! O, she will *sing* the savageness out of a bear. Of so high and plenteous *wit* and *invention* !” ⁴

¹ *Othello*, I. iii. 236-39.

² *Ibid.*, III. iii. 184-85.

³ *Ibid.*, II. i.

⁴ *Ibid.*, IV. i. 191-93.

Desdemona herself can also appreciate merit as it was conceived in the Renaissance epoch. Her remarks on Lodovico, when he comes to Cyprus, are that he “is a *proper* man” and that “he *speaks well*.”

Her beauty and accomplishments shine forth all the more brilliantly beside the rough strength and dark complexion of her husband. She has been described as a coral reef encircled by the tempestuous sea. Othello has no softer personal grace—he is only a valiant commander who has spent most of his time in fighting. He does not differ from his original who is described by Cinthio as “molto valoroso, il quale, per essere prò della persona, e per aver dato segno, nelle cose della guerra, di gran prudenza, e di vivace ingegno, era molto caro a que’ signori, i quali nel dar premio agli atti virtuosi avanzano quante repubbliche fur mai.”¹ With characteristic frankness Othello says :

“—since these arms of mine had seven years’ pith,
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have us’d
Their dearest action in the tented field ;
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle—”²

The Moor admits his *lack of eloquence* to the

¹ Giraldi Cinthio, *Hecatommithi*, Decad. III, Nov. 7.

² I. iii, 83-87.

Duke in the Venetian council, and says :

“ *Rude am I in my speech,
And little bless’d with the soft phrase of peace—*”¹

.....

“ And therefore little shall I grace my cause
In speaking for myself.”²

He realises, too, that youth, winning manners and speech and liberal profession of love so welcome to a young lady, are not his strong points; and he suspects that Desdemona’s infidelity is probably due to this :

“ Haply, for I am black,
And have not those soft *parts of conversation*
That chamberers have, or, for I am declin’d
Into the vale of years—yet that’s not much—
She’s gone—”³

A stray sentence in one of the speeches of Cassio, refers to the scholar and the soldier as totally different beings. He says to Desdemona, “ You may relish him (Iago) more in the *soldier* than in the *scholar*.”⁴ Could this possibly be a fling at the ideal of courtesy which claimed to have combined the virtues of both in the same person ?

¹ I. iii. 81-82.

² I. iii. 88-89.

³ III. iii. 263-67.

⁴ II. i. 165-66.

J—*Timon of Athens*

Timon the Misanthrope has been traced to Greek antiquities, and was compounded of fable and fact. The earliest references to him as man-hater and cynic are slight and few, but they show that "Timon was a distinct figure in the Old and Middle Comedy."¹ Shakespeare himself mentions the legendary cynic in one of his earlier dramas.² The sources of the story as developed in his tragedy are, however, different and less remote. Strabo's *Geography*, Plutarch's *Life of Antonius* and *Life of Alcibiades*, Lucian's comic dialogue entitled *Timon, or the Misanthrope*³ and an anonymous English comedy⁴ contain accounts of Timon's life which Shakespeare was likely to have read and laid under contribution. Other probable sources are Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure* and the Italian comedies of Boiardo and Caretto. But Paynter repeats the essential features of Plutarch, and Boiardo retells

¹ A writer of the Middle Comedy is known to have produced a play called *Timon*. See Lucian's works in the Loeb Classical Library, Vol. II, p. 325.

² See *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. iii. 167.

³ Latin and Italian translations of Lucian were available to Shakespeare. A French translation was published in Paris in 1583. It is not definitely known when the version by Francis Hickes was made. See E. Dowden, Introduction to *Timon*.

⁴ *Circ.* 1600. First edited by Dyce. See Shakespeare Society Transactions, 1842.

Lucian's story, while Caretto follows "Boiardo in following Lucian."

The elaboration and development of the old Timon legend in the works just referred to, proceeded step by step. That Timon's misanthropy was due to loss of wealth and of friends who fell off from him on account of his poverty, is first suggested by Strabo¹ who describes how Marc Antony lived a strange life like Timon's after the battle of Actium. Plutarch goes a step further in his *Life of Antonius* and specifically mentions the ingratitude of those who had been benefited by Timon, "For the *unthankfulness* of those he had done good unto, and whom he took to be his friends, he was angry with all men, and would trust no man." Lucian's dialogue is supposed to have been the first full expansion of the Timon legend. In the opening soliloquy of Timon, his past activities—his liberality to friends and charity to the poor—are retrospectively referred to. He was "the *rich man*" who raised "so many Athenians to high station," and made them rich. He was "the one," Hermes tells Zeus, "who gave us the complete hecatombs and used to entertain us brilliantly at his house during the Diasia." References are made to some of Timon's benefactions towards the end of the dialogue. Mention is made by Hermes of the

¹ *Geography*, XVII. 9.

loss of his vast wealth through excessive benevolence, the ingratitude of those whom he benefited and his misanthropy. Lucian's meaning is more clearly brought out in the speeches of Riches, who is ordered by Zeus to go back to Timon. He finds him under the guardianship of Poverty who claims to "have made a noble and a valuable man of him, after taking him over in a wretched plight that was due to *Luxury* and putting him in charge of Wisdom and Toil." The author of the English comedy follows Lucian in the main plot of his play, but departing from all earlier writers, he introduces changes some of which reappear in Shakespeare. For example, "he devotes half of his comedy to Timon in prosperity, shows him scattering his gold among the people, revelling with his friends," and "enriching his favorites." The faithful steward, the redeemed debtor and the pretended banquet at which "the wronged Timon flings at the guests who are invited stones painted as artichokes" are also some of his contributions which have left their traces in Shakespeare. But he attributes no other virtues to Timon besides love of magnificence, liberality and kindness to friends. Neither in Plutarch, nor in Lucian, nor even in the English comedy is there any distinct suggestion of Timon's intellectual or aesthetic predilections.¹

¹ Lucian mentions that Philiades praised Timon once for singing a song, though "everybody else kept still." Bad singing is certainly not an accomplishment.

In Shakespeare, however, these constitute the most attractive features of Timon's personality at the very beginning of the play. Shakespeare's Timon is not only wealthy and large-hearted, but is also a man of taste and culture, a connoisseur in art and a lover of poetry and painting, with a keen sense of honour and a graceful personality. He also delights in the company of artists. There have been differences of opinion about Shakespeare's share in the authorship of *Timon of Athens*. But there is unanimity of views in respect of Shakespeare's hand in ll. 1-175 of Act I, sc. i. of the play. It is here that the distinctive Shakespearean attributes of Timon just referred to appear. The Poet and the Painter figuring here have no prototypes in any of the so-called sources of the play. In Lucian's dialogue Gnathonides brings Timon a new song from "one of the dithyrambs" when he learns that Timon has grown rich again. But it is nowhere suggested that he is himself a poet,—he is a toady as Philiades and his other companions are. Gnathonides did not compose the song, and his desire to make a present of it to Timon was probably prompted by the contemporary manner of flattering rich people. Hermogenes in the English comedy is not very different from Gnathonides. The Poet in Shakespeare's *Timon* has no similarity with either—"he is as much like the Hermogenes of the old play, whose only claim to being a poet is that he can sing and

play the fiddle, as like the Gnathonides of Lucian, whose poetic activity consists solely in bringing Timon a copy of the latest song from Athens."¹ There is a description in Lucian of Timon's palmy days by way of retrospection; but Timon is always found in the company of flatterers, gluttons and drunkards. In the crude old comedy the question of his association with men of taste hardly arises.

The prodigal Timon of the earlier Acts of Shakespeare's play is radically different from the misanthrope of the later Acts. One should excite contempt, and the other disgust. Yet Shakespeare clearly expected his audience to be attracted by Timon's personality, and to sympathise with him. It has been urged that Shakespeare realised his purpose by making Timon a victim of usury. Plutarch (and Paynter) depicted him simply as a misanthrope, and barely suggested "unthankfulness" as the cause of his misery. Lucian harped on the ingratitude of his friends. In the old English comedy the hero is ruined through sheer accident—by the loss of his ships. In Boiardo, on whom Shakespeare is believed by Bond to have drawn, "the hero's father who built up the fortune, was a usurer, and the son's dissipation of this wealth appears as the just effect of ill-acquired money."² In Elizabethan popular

¹ E. H. Wright, *The Authorship of Timon of Athens*, p. 20.

² *MLR*, Vol. 29, p. 22.

tradition based partly on these accounts, Timon was never an object of sympathy. His misanthropy was regarded as unmotivated, and though it attracted notice, it did not excite pity. In Shakespeare, it is pointed out, there is a change. He alters the theme and point of view of a popular story. Usury does not create Timon's fortune, but destroys it, and Timon is made the victim of the vice which was associated with the hated Jews. He was undoubtedly liberal to a fault—a prodigal of the extreme type,—but Shakespeare definitely indicates how the crash was caused by “the high rates of interest when his steward had to borrow to anticipate his income, and by heavy forfeitures when he could not keep the day and hour nominated in the bond.”¹ The most tragic consequences issued from usury in *Timon of Athens*, and tragedy was narrowly averted with great difficulty in *The Merchant of Venice*. Sympathy for the English aristocracy ruined in the sixteenth century through a variety of causes—not the least important of which was usury—is, according to one critic, the keynote of Shakespeare's play.²

This view³ may be partly true. But the Elizabethan aristocrat was remarkable for culture

¹ *MLR*, Vol. 29, p. 22.

² *MLR*, Vol. 29, p. 27.

³ It has been suggested that in *Timon of Athens* there is very little that is Hellenic, and undoubtedly English social conditions of the sixteenth century lie in the back-

traceable to the influence of the Italian Renaissance in England. As already pointed out,¹ his ruin was due to love of easy life which went hand in hand with his devotion to study,—generally in the Universities,—and his cultivation of the softer graces of life. The merchants who bought up his land and grew wealthy, were given to hard work, and were satisfied with picking up at school just a little of useful knowledge, as distinct from culture, which was likely to be directly helpful to them in their profession.

Sympathy for Timon in Shakespeare is due as much to his financial ruin at the hands of usurers as to his culture and winning personality. In his play Timon's first appearance is heralded by a fanfare of trumpets, and the 'noble Athenian' addresses 'himself courteously² to every suitor.' Even his flatterers, as Apemantus points out,³ appear to be well-bred and well-behaved. Timon is brave, as a courtier is expected to be, and he has saved Athens from the attacks of neighbouring states.⁴ A senator, therefore, offers him the "captainship" of Athens, "with absolute power."⁵ He is fond

ground of the play. See M. W. MacCallum, *Shakespeare's Roman Plays and their Background*, p. 8.

¹ See Chap. II, *ante*.

² I. i.

³ I. i. 258.

⁴ IV. iii. 93-95.

⁵ V. i. 161-63.

of hunting, too.¹ Timon comes of a noble family,² and looks upon himself almost as a prince. He speaks of the end of his "reign" in his last speech, *i.e.*, shortly before his death. His sense of honour is repeatedly referred to. Asks Lucullus, "And how does that *honourable*, complete, free-hearted *gentleman* of Athens?"³ The First Stranger praises his "*honourable* carriage." Timon's uprightness or virtuous⁴ disposition is emphasised at the very beginning of the first scene of Act I. The Merchant admires him freely as

"A most incomparable man, breath'd, as it were,
To an untirable and *continue* goodness."⁵

¹ II. ii. 8.

² IV. ii. 6. Timon is "a *noble* Athenian."

³ III. i. 9-11.

⁴ Castiglione gives a prominent place to moral goodness which, in his opinion, is as desirable as intellectual powers. He remarks, "Socrates said well, that he thought his *instruction* has brought forth good fruits when by it he has provoked anyone to apply his *will* to the knowledge and learning of *virtue*." "I reckon him onely a true morall Philosopher that will be good." Castiglione's insistence on high ancestry in a courtier is also prompted by his love of the moral ideal. "... *nobleness of birth* is, as it were, a cleare lampe that sheweth forth and bringeth into light, workes both good and bad, and inflameth and *provoketh unto vertue*." (*The Courtier*, Bk. I.)

⁵ I. i. 13-14.

The First Stranger praises Timon's "right noble¹ mind, illustrious *virtue*." The Poet specially mentions to the Painter "his good and gracious nature," and his "happy verse" "aptly sings *the good*." It is his character that wins for Timon the devotion and love of his servants, one of whom exclaims after his ruin :

Such a house broke !
So noble a master fall'n !

The tribute offered to him by the First Lord, whether sincere or not, is fully deserved, and he rightly admires

" The noblest mind he carries,
That ever govern'd man." ²

Timon's goodness is a foil to the baseness and insincerity of his friends. These are not merely hard-headed fortune-seekers and avaricious creatures, but are also deliberately false. Apemantus refers to these when he remarks :

" The strain of man's bred out
Into baboon and monkey." ³

He is thinking of the same creatures when he says to Timon :

" Till I be gentle, stay thou for thy good morrow;
When thou art Timon's dog, and these *knaves* honest."

¹ III. ii. 83.

² I. i. 289-90.

³ I. i. 258-59.

The "grace" on which Castiglione and Pico expatiate, is a combination of many attributes ; and nobility of character and physical charm are certainly included in them. It reveals itself in winning manners which captivate people's hearts. Timon's "large fortune," says the Poet,

" Upon his good and *gracious* nature hanging,
Subdues and properties to his love and tendance
All sorts of hearts; yea, from the glass-fac'd flatterer
To Apemantus, that few things loves better
Than to abhor himself; even he drops down
The knee before him and returns in peace
Most rich in Timon's nod." ¹

The physical element of grace is referred to elsewhere by the Poet :

"—how this *grace*
Speaks his own standing ! " ²

It is not for nothing that—

" Fortune with her ivory hand wafts to her "

Timon

" Whose present *grace* to present slaves and servants
Translates his rivals."

The brilliant personality of Timon is very well symbolised in the Poet's imagery representing him as Fortune's minion. He is, in every respect, marked out from his fellow beings who pale into insignificance beside him. The Poet says :

" —I have upon a high and pleasant hill
Feign'd Fortune to be thron'd: the base o' the mount

¹ I. i. 57-63.

² I. i. 31-32.

Is rank'd with all deserts, all kinds of natures,
That labour on the bosom of this sphere
To propagate their states: amongst them all,
Whose eyes are on this sovereign lady fix'd,
One do I personate of Lord Timon's frame,
Whom Fortune with her ivory hand wafts to her—”¹

Vast learning is not to be expected in a man who has to cultivate many kinds of physical and mental accomplishments. Though Timon is not eminent for his scholarship, there is some indication that he possesses intellectual qualities in an ample measure. The Poet thus admiringly refers to his portrait :

“ —what a *mental power*
This eye shoots forth! how big *imagination*
Moves in this lip!”²

Timon's intellect and imagination are revealed in his taste in art—especially in poetry and painting. He can, if necessary, discourse on their nature and value, and his appreciation shows taste and judgment :

“ The painting is almost the natural man;
For since dishonour traffics with man's nature,
He is but outside: these pencill'd figures are
Even such as they give out.”

Even when he has lost his balance of mind, Timon thus comments, almost in the manner of a literary critic, on the work of the Poet :

“ —thy verse swells with stuff so fine and smooth
That thou art even natural in thin art.

¹ I. i. 64-70.

² I. i. 32-34.

But for all this, my honest-natur'd friends,
I must needs say you have a little fault."

Timon is lacking in the courtier's brilliant powers of conversation as well as in humour even in his days of glory. People do not hang upon his lips or admire his eloquence, though his liberality and capacity for genuine friendship draw to him crowds of admirers, both false and true. Even if over-emphasised in the sixteenth century and included in Italian *courtesy*, these virtues are really traceable to Aristotle. In his dark days Timon is bitter in speech, and his fury often makes his utterances unmeaning.

The supreme type of tragedy imports a psychological change in the protagonist, not mere fall from power or even physical death. *Timon of Athens* is one of the bitterest of Shakespeare's tragedies, because it is the record of the transformation of a generous and eminently philanthropic man into a cynic and hater of mankind. It may be added that the tragic gloom is intensified by the degradation of an intelligent and cultured¹ mind to banality and ineptitude.

According to the canons of drama, the hero of a tragedy should possess great virtues along with

¹ Apropos of the influence of the Italian ideal of courtesy in *Timon of Athens*, one little fact may be mentioned. The epitaph on Timon's tomb, as Douce has pointed out, has similarity with the following verses

some defects. This may be regarded as one of the reasons why Shakespeare attributed to Timon so many resplendent qualities of head and heart side by side with prodigality, and why his conception of Timon's character differs from that of Lucian or from that of the author of the old English comedy. Shakespeare, according to some critics, wanted Timon to appear as a public hero. Hence a hater of both God and man is rendered supremely attractive. "The paradox . . . of Timon's moral excellence is Shakespeare's own addition to his source." Love of culture and a brilliant personality, too, are bestowed on Timon for the same reason, so that the tragedy is "not a picture of misanthropy but a lament for fallen greatness."

K. *Cymbeline*

The story of the wager on the chastity of Imogen resembles the plots of "two old romances and of one middle-age play in the French Language."¹ from Pettie's translation of Guazzo's *La Civile Conversazione* :

"Here doe I lie ne am the same
I heretofore was wont to bee ;
Thou reader never aske my name,
A wretched end God send to thee."

Some, however, are inclined to hold that two epitaphs from Plutarch are combined into one in *Timon of Athens*. See *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, Vol. II. p. 72.

¹ See the Introduction to *The Tale Told by the Fishwife of Stand on the Green* in *Shakespeare's Library*, Vol. II.

The romances belong to the thirteenth century, and are entitled *Roman de La Violette, ou de Gerard de Nevers etc.* and *Le Compte de Poitiers*. Their heroes (counterparts of Posthumus Leonatus) whose wives are defamed and disgraced, are typical feudal nobles without any intellectual bent, facility in speech, humour, or charm of manners. Quite similar is the hero of the French play *Un Miracle de Notre-Dame*. Parallels to the wager between Posthumus and Iachimo, nearer or more remote, can also, according to Dowden, be discovered elsewhere, e.g., in German and Scandinavian stories, and "in an old French romance which tells of King Florus and the fair Jehane." But probably Shakespeare owed nothing to any one of these directly,¹ and the ninth novel of the second day of Boccaccio's *Decamerone* is regarded as an unquestionable source of the non-historical part of *Cymbeline*. An English version of it, —*The Tale Told by the Fishwife of Stand on the Green*,—was included in a publication entitled *Westward for Smelts*. It lays the scene of the story in England under Henry VI, and differs from the original in some respects. There is dispute about the date of its publication, and it is not therefore certain that Shakespeare knew it. If not, he may have actually used the Italian original or its French version by A. le Maçon.

¹ E. Dowden, Introduction to *Cymbeline*, p. 1055.

Since it is the wife who has to face the ordeal, virtues and attractions are heaped on her both in the Italian story and its English version. But the husband has hardly any distinguishing attribute, intellectual or otherwise. Bernabò Lomellin says that "di spezial grazia da Dio," he has "una donna per moglie la più compiuta di tutte quelle virtù che donna, o ancora cavaliere in gran parte o donzello, dee avere, che forse in Italia ne fosse un'altra; per ciò che ella era bella del corpo, e giovane ancora assai, e destra et atante della persona, nè alcuna cosa era che a donna appartenesse, sì come lavorar di lavorii di seta e simili cose, ch'ella non facesse meglio che alcun'altra. . . . Appresso questo la commendò meglio sapere cavalcare un cavallo, tenere uno uccello, leggere e scrivere e fare una ragione, che se un mercatante fosse."¹ The English version mentions that "in her time there were few found that matched her, (none at all that excelled her) so excellent were the gifts that Nature had bestowed on her. In body was she not onely so rare, and unpareld, but also in her gifts of minde: so that this creature it seemed, that Grace and Nature strove who should excell each other in their gifts toward her."²

But Bernabò in the Novella is only one of the "mercatanti Italiani" who apparently have neither

¹ *Il Decamerone*, Gior. II, Nov. IX.

² *The Tale Told by the Fishwife in Shakespeare's Library*, Vol. II.

culture nor physical prowess. When contradicting Ambrogiuolo, Bernabò admits his own lack of intellectual powers: "Io son mercatante e non filosofo, e come mercatante risponderò." In *The Tale Told by the Fishwife* the husband is only a gentleman, without any intellectual quality. In Shakespeare it is just the other way. Though Imogen has virtue and strength of character, attractive accomplishments and graces seem to have been almost monopolised by Posthumus Leonatus. They are set off by his poverty as well as by his undeserved miseries. Shakespeare shows him to advantage by uniting in *Cymbeline* British History with Romance. Even the villain Iachimo is full of admiration for the resplendent personality of Posthumus, and says, "I have seen him in Britain; he was then of a crescent note, expected to prove so worthy as since he hath been allowed the name of; but I could then have looked on him without the help of admiration, though the catalogue of his endowments had been tabled by his side and I to peruse him by items." Shakespeare's hero is thus easily distinguishable from all his so-called prototypes, and the difference is mostly due to the influence of Renaissance courtesy.

Leonatus was nobly descended, for his father "had his titles" for service in wars; but he was a poor orphan when *Cymbeline* took up his upbringing. The King

"Breeds him and makes him of his bedchamber,
Puts to him all the learnings that his time

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Could make him the receiver of; which he took,
As we do air, fast as 'twas minister'd,—"¹

He became a courtier—"lived in court"—and
in time grew up to be a pattern of perfection—

"A sample to the youngest, to the more mature
A glass that feated them, and to the graver"
A child that guided dotards."²

Imogen loved this "poor but *worthy gentleman*" solely for his character, learning, virtue and charming manners which were admired by all who knew him and which made him so popular. Says a noble of the court:

"—he that hath her,—
I mean that married her
. is a creature such
As, to seek through the regions of the earth
For one his like, there would be something failing
In him that should compare. I do not think
So fair an *outward* and such *stuff within*
Endows a man but he."³

With all his grace, virtue, culture, and engaging personality—the hall-mark of the courtier—Leonatus is lacking in powers of conversation. Probably the tragic atmosphere of the play and Leonatus's part in it, afford him no scope for sallies of humour, delicate interruptions and retorts.

¹ *Cymbeline*, I. i. 42-46.

² *Ibid.*, I. i. 48-50.

³ *Ibid.*, I. i. 17-24.

But his courage shines forth when he fights against the Romans and, with the disguised Belarius and his two "sons," turns the tide of the battle against them. Iachimo confesses to King Cymbeline how his

" Italian brain
'Can in your duller Britain operate
Most vilely."

If, as has rightly been pointed out, Iachimo is the typical villain of the sixteenth century Italian novel, who has, thanks to the teachings of Machiavelli and the example of Cesare Borgia and others like him, no moral scruples, Leonatus has certainly some of the typical characteristics of the Renaissance gentleman.

Leonatus is distinguishable from Guiderius and Arviragus. They are of royal stock and, though brought up in mountain-caves, away from the court, cannot forget their inherited instinct, *viz.*, love of action. The dull life in the forest seems to them to be almost stifling. They want to join the army where they expect to find an outlet for their pent-up energy, and to carve out a career for themselves with their swords. Arviragus cries out impatiently :

" By this sun that shines,
I'll thither ; what thing is it that I never
Did see man die ! scarce ever look'd on blood,
But that of coward hares, hot goats and venison !
Never *bestrid a horse*—"

Belarius believes that

" their *blood* thinks scorn,
Till it fly out and show them *princes born*." ¹

It is instinct unaffected by education or social influence that makes them kind and courteous, as is evident from their attitude towards Fidele. Though a stranger and intruder, he (Imogen) is treated as a brother to whom their hearts go out in unstinted sympathy. Belarius quite appropriately remarks :

" 'Tis wonder
That an invisible *instinct* should frame them
To royalty unlearn'd, *honour* untaught,
Civility not seen from other."

The influence of the Feudal Age is here evident in Shakespeare's emphasis on inherited love of politeness and glorious action. It made much of high ancestry, and believed that man's nature and activity were controlled by his parentage. That is why the *chevalier* usually belonged to the upper ranks. While recognising the importance of ancestry, *i.e.*, of inherited physical courage and nobility of soul, the Renaissance stressed the value of culture and of other virtues—powers of conversation, sense of humour, winning and sociable manners—which had to be acquired and which in some cases lifted up men of unknown or insigni-

¹ IV. iv. 53-54.

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ficant origin to deserved pre-eminence. Arviragus and Guiderius have the impress of feudal or chivalric virtues, while Posthumus Leonatus bears the stamp of Renaissance culture associated with the courtier. The latter has what the two brothers, in spite of their high birth, valour and noble instincts, do not possess, *viz.*, grace and intellectual accomplishments.

CHAPTER V

THE SONNETS

Plato's theories of beauty and love were interpreted in the light of Alexandrian Neo-Platonism by Ficinus in Italy during the Renaissance. His commentary inspired copious elaborations of the Platonic doctrines by Benivieni, Pico, Bembo and others. Castiglione followed in the footsteps of these, and devoted a portion of his courtesy book to the discussion of love. According to him, a courtier should also be a lover.

Love has been the subject-matter of sonnets since the days of Dante. In his *Vita Nuova*, however, it is almost a theological virtue. In Petrarch's sonnets it is humanised, but its literary treatment is so much encrusted with conceits that Petrarchism has in later times been looked upon as a doubtful compliment to a poet. The Petrarchan sonnet long remained the literary fashion of Europe, and had imitators in Italy, France and England.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, however, there was a stand against Petrarchism in France. Platonism became the dominant note of French poetry from 1540 to 1550 and, for a time, of La Pléiade school.

In England sonneteering was first inspired by the work of Petrarch who was copiously imitated

by Wyatt and Surrey.¹ Yet the best sonneteers of the later Elizabethan period, steeped as they were in Petrarchism, imitated also the French Platonising sonneteers including the Pléiade masters who drew upon the elaborations of Neo-Platonic theories like those of Castiglione.

Shakespeare's sonnets, too, bear traces of both Petrarchism and Platonism. He followed contemporary conventions of the art, but on occasion he also asserted his independence. One illustration may be cited. Petrarch (like Dante) had addressed his sonnets to a lady, and Petrarchists scrupulously followed him in describing the physical charms of the beloved, her varying moods, her cruelty, her tyranny, etc., and reproduced the common Petrarchan conceits. Elizabethan sonneteers—even poets like Daniel, Constable and Drayton whom Shakespeare is believed to have imitated at times—were no exception to the rule. But Shakespeare addressed most of his sonnets to a young man whom he loved as a friend. There are those who regard such devotion as unnatural, and think that the sonnets “form a stupendous allegory; they express a profound philosophy.” It has been observed that the “young friend whom Shakespeare addresses, is in truth the poet's ideal Self or Ideal Manhood, or the Spirit of Beauty, or the

¹ Sidney Lee, Introduction to *Elizabethan Sonnets*, Vol. I, pp. xxvii-xxix.



Reason, or the Divine Logos."¹ Dowden points out to these lovers of esoteric truth, the "affection, expressed also in enthusiastic sonnets, of Michael Angelo for Tommaso Cavalieri, that of Languet for Philip Sidney, that of Montaigne for Estienne de la Boëtie," and observes how in Renaissance days the passion of friendship "was often placed on a more transcendent height than the passion of love."

(2) 9 | This Renaissance view of friendship was really Platonic. The *Lysis* is Plato's dialogue on friendship which is only another name of love as discussed in the *Symposium*. Plato's idea of love has reference to the state of contemporary society in Athens. In Greek cities love between youths was common enough. For a youth to be without a lover, was regarded as strange. The older of the pair was called the lover, and the younger the beloved or "listener." It was the duty of the lover to train up his beloved in feats of arms.² The *Charmides* and the *Lysis* mention how physical beauty generated love or friendship of this kind among young men. Plato tried to use this love as a stepping-stone to the higher type of love based on virtue. Says Pausanias in the *Symposium*, "Evil is the vulgar lover who loves the body

¹ E. Dowden, Introduction to the *Sonnets* of Shakespeare, p. 7.

² B. Jowett, Introduction to the *Symposium*.

rather than the soul . . . and therefore when the bloom of youth which he was desiring is over, he takes wing and flies away . . . whereas the love of the noble disposition is life-long." By an extension of this idea of virtuous love between man and man, Plato arrives at the conception of Absolute Beauty in the *Symposium* and of Truth in the *Phaedrus*. But in all this discussion of true or spiritual love not a word is said by Plato about woman, and it is clear from the context that Plato was not thinking of the noble affection of man for woman. Part of this Platonic conception of love as friendship between young men inspired Romans like Cicero; but the whole of it was revived during the Renaissance when physical beauty became an object of worship in itself, and also a stepping-stone to the realisation of something higher. Says Dowden, "In the Renaissance epoch, among natural products of a time when life ran swift and free, touching with its current high and difficult places, the ardent friendship of man with man was one." "To elevate it above mere personal regard, a kind of Neo-Platonism was at hand, which represented Beauty and Love incarnated in a human creature as earthly vicegerents of the Divinity." It is the Platonic idea of friendship or love as revived during the Renaissance that inspires most of Shakespeare's sonnets, and differentiates them from the typical Petrarchan sonnet from which they might have borrowed a

phrase here or an imagery there. This Renaissance Platonism affects even the sonnets on the dark lady where the poet had ample opportunity of writing in the Petrarchan vein. But Petrarchism is there perceptibly modified, and conceits are more sparingly used in them than in similar compositions of other Elizabethan sonneteers. Though skilled in music, the lady is dark-haired and dark-eyed, and lacks the 'roseate cheeks' of the conventional beauty of the Petrarchan sonnet.

Renaissance Platonism, as already stated, was elaborated in the works of Ficinus, Benivieni, Pico, Bembo and Castiglione. Whether they were all accessible to Shakespeare, as they were to Spenser, or not, must always remain a difficult question. If they were, whether Shakespeare's knowledge of Italian was sufficient for an appreciative study of them, is another problem. But Shakespeare probably read Castiglione's *Cortegiano* in Hoby's English version. It is here that the sources of Shakespeare's Platonism partly lay.¹ Friendship or love in which an old man (such as the poet represents himself to be in Sonnet XXII) may indulge (as a courtier), and which has as its main urge the love of Truth, Beauty and the Good, is discussed in Book IV of the *Cortegiano*. As the courtier is expected to be fairly advanced in age, the

¹ George Wyndham points out the Platonism of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, but makes no reference to its Italian sources.

question arises whether he should be a lover. Lord Gaspar objects: "I cannot see, when he is well drawne in yeares, how it will stand well with him to be a lover, considering . . . Love frameth not with *olde men*, and the trickes that in yong men be galantresse, courtesie and precisenesse so acceptable to women, in them are mere follies, and fondnesse to bee laughed at, and purchase him that useth them hatred of women, and mockes of others." Lord Octavian answers, "Since all the other qualities appointed to the courtier are meete for him, although hee be *olde*, mee thinke we shoulde not then barre him from his happinesse to love." Bembo replies, "in case our courtier (though he bee *olde*) were kindled with those loves that bee sweete without any bitter smacke, he should feele no miserie nor wretchednesse at all. . . . But in loving should perhaps love after a sorte, that might not onely bring him in slaunder, but to much praise and happinesse, without any lothsomnesse at all, the which very seldom or never happeneth to yong men." Then comes an explanation of the stages through which an elderly courtier may arrive, from enjoyment of sensuous beauty, at the realisation of Intellectual or Divine Beauty or of Truth.

Some Platonic notions, while they are in *The Courtier* and other treatises, seem to have been in the air in Shakespeare's days. Of the sonneteers, Spenser and Sidney had knowledge

of Plato—possibly in the original and certainly in the commentaries. Spenser was a keener admirer of Plato than Sidney, and if his sonnets retained traces of Petrarchism, the *Fowre Hymnes* dealt almost exclusively with Platonic ideas and their Italian elaborations. Shakespeare had them before him, and it would be unreasonable to suppose that he learnt nothing from them. In the *Timaeus* God creates the world according to a Pattern, while in the *Symposium* mention is made of Perfect Beauty as the ultimate Reality. Spenser combines the two conceptions, and speaks of “that wondrous Paterne” which is “perfect Beautie.”¹ Romei calls it proportion, and says, “Proportion which, in God, is part of His Beautie, is nothing but idea and the ideal form of the universe existing in the divine intellect, as the model and ideal form of an edifice exists in the soul of the architect.”¹ Shakespeare refers to his beautiful friend as the *pattern* after which beautiful objects have been created by God :

‘ Nor did I wonder at the lily’s white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose ;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you *pattern* of all those.”²

The distinction between Reality and phenomena is expressed by Plato in the correlatives “substance” and “shadow.” Sensuous beauty is supposed

¹ *Discorsi*, Giornata Prima.

² Sonnet XCVIII.

to be the reflection of Absolute Beauty. Bembo remarks, "Just as stars take their light from the sun, so all these beautiful things take their quality from *the divine and eternal beauty*." ¹ Castiglione repeats the same thought, "Speaking of the beautie that we meane, which is onely it, that appeareth in bodies, and especially in the face of man, and moveth this fervent coveting which wee call Love, we will terme it an *influence of the heavenly bountifulnesse*. . . . It . . . decketh out and lightneth the subject where it shineth with a marvellous grace and glistering." ² Shakespeare asks his friend :

"What is your *substance*, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange *shadows* on you tend ?" ³

In Sonnet XLIII the "shadow" or mental picture of his friend, which appears to him in dreams in the darkness of the night, is exceedingly bright, and he wonders whether the "substance" will prove to be still brighter in broad daylight.

(15) Truth is wonderfully beautiful in Plato.⁴ Castiglione refers to this when he says, "This is the *beautie* unseparable from *the high bountie*, which with her voice calleth and draweth to her al thinges ; and not onely to the indowed with

¹ *Degli Asolani*, Libro III.

² *The Courtier*. Bk. IV.

³ Sonnet LIII.

⁴ See the *Phaedrus*.

understanding giveth understanding, to the reasonable reason, to the sensuall sense and appetite to live.”¹ It is “in such wise beautifull, that all other beautifull thinges be beautifull, because they be partners of the beautie of it.” These ideas possibly suggested to Shakespeare his conception of the beauty of the mind (or intellect) in Sonnet LXIX. He endows his friend not only with physical beauty but also, in a greater measure, with that beauty of the mind (intellectual beauty) without which the former is likely to be dim and unattractive :

“O ! how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which *truth* doth give !”²

The Platonic idea of immortality through marriage and issue appears many times in the *Sonnets*, and it seems that it was a stock notion in Shakespeare’s days. In Sonnet XIV the poet says to his beloved :

“ — ‘ *Truth* and *Beauty* shall together thrive,
If from thyself to store thou wouldst convert ’ ;
Or else of thee this I prognosticate :
‘ Thy end is *truth*’s and *beauty*’s doom and date ’ .”

The progress of the lover towards the realisation of Absolute or Divine Beauty, has been dealt with in detail in Benivieni, Pico and Castiglione. The subject is rather vague, and leads

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. IV.

² Sonnet LIV.

to mysticism. Its treatment is sometimes very fanciful. Traces of this peculiar handling of love and beauty, and of the conceits and tortuous thoughts which characterise it, are to be found in some of Shakespeare's sonnets. The conceits often seem to be Petrarchan, but the Petrarchan background, *viz.*, the "soft warrior" in her varying moods, is obviously lacking. As Hoby's translation was available to Shakespeare, and the poetical treatment of some of these ideas had been common in the sonnets of French Platonists, of some of their English followers, of Sidney and of Spenser, and in the latter's *Fowre Hymnes*, it may legitimately be urged that the influence of the discourses of the Italian authors on Shakespeare is quite probable. But Shakespeare's debt to them has not attracted the notice it deserves. In tracing the Platonism of his sonnets, Harrison refers only to their identification of the friend with Absolute Beauty and to their use of Platonic imageries like "shadow" and "substance," but he makes no mention of writers like Pico,¹ Benivieni and Castiglione.

In Book IV of *The Courtier*, Castiglione divides the lover's progress into six distinct stages, from the moment when he feels the promptings of love at the sight of a beautiful face till his soul views the wide sea of pure divine beauty. The

¹ J. S. Harrison, *Platonism in English Poetry*, pp. 128-129 and pp. 134-135.

lover first impresses the face on his mind in order to alleviate the pangs of separation. Straightway, however, his imagination idealises it, and it appears to him to be fairer than it really is. In the second stage it is this idealised beauty that he loves. Stimulated by it, he next comes to form an image of a face or figure which is, as it were, the sum of all loveliness—“a combination of selected charms.” In the opinion of Castiglione, the lover soon feels within himself “what a straight bond it is to bee alwaies in the trouble to behold the beautie of one bodie alone. And therefore to come out of this so narrowe a roome, hee shall gather in his thought by litle and litle so many ornaments, that meddling all beautie together, he shal make an universall conceite, and bring the multitude of them to the unitie of one alone, that is generally spread over all the nature of man. And thus shall he beholde no more the particular beautie of one woman, but an universall, that decketh out all bodies.” In the fourth stage the lover realises beauty not as an external entity, but as an inherent part of his soul. He next universalises this abstract beauty which he discovers within himself, and, lastly, has a vision of the beauty of God in which he is merged. To the formation of the portrait of the beloved in the first of the above stages, the eye as well as the heart contributes. Castiglione goes on, “The influence of that (beloved’s) beautie when it

is present, giveth a wonderous delite to the lover, and setting his hart on fire, quickeneth and melteth certaine vertues in a traunce and congeled in the soule, the which nourished with the heate of love, flow about and goe bubbling nigh the hart, and thrust out through the eyes those spirits which bee most fine vapours made of the clearest and the purest part of the bloud, which receive the image of beautie, and decke it with a thousande sundrie furnitures." This conceit has influenced Sonnet XXIV:

" Mine eye hath play'd the *painter* and hath stell'd
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart ;

... ..
—through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where your true *image* pictur'd lies—."

(iv) The second stage in which " through the vertue of imagination, hee shall fashion with himselfe that beautie much more faire than it is," is hinted at in Sonnets XXVII, LIX and LXI.
The poet believes :

" —my soul's *imaginary* sight
Presents thy shadow to my *sightless view*,
Which, like a *jewel* hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous and her old face new."

In the fourth stage where beauty ceases to be an external object, and is realised as part of the beholder's mind, the lover " may come into *his wit*, to beholde the beautie that is seene with the *eyes* of

the minde, which then begin to be sharpe and throughly seeing, when the eyes of the bodie lose the floure of their sightlinesse.”¹ In Sonnets XXXVII, XXXIX, XL, LXII, LXXIV, the underlying idea is almost the same. The beauty of the beloved is really the projection of the lover’s mind. Shakespeare sings :

“ My spirit is thine, the better part of me.”²

“ Take all my loves, my love, yea, take them all ;
What hast thou then more than thou hadst before ?
No love, my love, that thou mayst true love call ;
All mine was *thine* before thou hadst this more.”³

Again :

“ . . . all that beauty that doth cover thee
Is but the seemly raiment of *my heart*—”⁴

Dowden in his note on this sonnet remarks that the poet “ comforts himself by claiming his friend’s beauty as his own.” But this explanation takes no account of the source of the idea in courtesy books suffused with Italian Neo-Platonism.

The merging of the lover’s soul in that of the beloved, forms a higher stage. A reference to the two being reduced into one, is noticeable in Sonnet XXXIX :

“ Even for this let us *divided* live,
And our dear love lose name of *single one*,

¹ *The Courtier*, Bk. IV.

² Sonnet LXXIV.

³ Sonnet XL.

⁴ Sonnet XXII.

That by this *separation* I may give
That due to thee, which thou deserv'st alone."

Sometimes this leads to love's illusions, for the lover sees not what others' eyes see, but what his own mind dictates :

"In faith, I do not love thee with *mine eyes*,
For they in thee a thousand errors note ;
But 'tis *my heart* that loves what they despise,
Who, in *despite of view*, is pleas'd to dote." ¹

Reference may also be made in this connection to Sonnet CXLVIII and to the speech of Theseus on "the lunatic, the lover, and the poet" in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*.

¹ Sonnet CXLI. 661



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ERRATA

Page	Incorrect	Correct
44 line 9	informing	in forming
56 foot note 1	Rap.	Rep.
117 footnote 2, l. 4	Adrjatic	Adriatic
120 lines 10-11	oft rue	of true
130 line 18	predelections	predilections
131 line 19	heihas	he has
146 footnote 1	Venic	Venice
163 line 26	making	makings
172 line 1	fencing	to fencing



BY THE SAME AUTHOR

STUDIES IN SPENSER

(Published by the University of Calcutta)

Extracts from Opinions:

I.....am much impressed by the *writer's mastery both of Spenser and of Platonic conceptions*, illustrating once more the aptitude often observed in the Indian mind for *entering into Western and especially Platonic ideas, as a rule less easily mastered by English minds*. I trust that *this remarkable contribution to the higher study of a great English poet* may do something to enlarge the body of common culture and common intellectual ideals in which our two peoples may eventually find a true comradeship within our common humanity.

C. H. HERFORD

Professor of English Literature University of Manchester.

The whole book is an example of *honest scholarship—well-documented, well-planned, well-written, and does vast credit to the writer and to the school of English letters in the University of Calcutta.*

—*Calcutta Review*

I think it both *valuable and well-written*. Many a thesis made in Europe with the advantage of access to great libraries, is far less to the purpose. Mr. Bhattacharje's remarks on an old article of mine on Brunonaturally interest me.....I think he is *quite right in pointing out the further parallels, on which I did not touch, between Bruno and Spenser.*

OLIVER ELTON

Emeritus Professor of English Literature, University of Liverpool; Hon. Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford

Devout Spenserians will welcome this evidence that their poet is sympathetically and profitably studied in the East as

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in the West. Mr. Mohinimohan Bhattacharje in his "*Studies in Spenser*" limits himself strictly to the tracing of some sources of Spenser's philosophy, especially of those related to Platonism, and *performs his task usefully and with lucidity*.....In the end much must remain a matter of opinion : we are glad to have Mr. Bhattacharje's, *based on knowledge and thought.*

—*Modern Language Review*, April, 1930

PLATONIC IDEAS IN SPENSER

(Published by Longmans, Green & Co)

Dr. M. M. Bhattacharje of Calcutta University, who previously produced a dissertation entitled *Studies in Spenser* in which he dealt, among other topics, with the question of Bruno's influence, has now published a little volume, *Platonic Ideas in Spenser* (Longmans, Green & Co., 1935, xii+200 pp.) which *will be interesting to students who are anxious to distinguish the varying degrees of the poet's debt to Aristotle, Plato, the neo-Platonists, and the French poets.* The author is acquainted with the most recent work in these fields, and draws largely upon it, but *he is not a mere compiler of the best that is known and thought; he has made careful analyses of the significant characters in The Faerie Queene, and is led thereby to differ from one or other of his predecessors at many points in his discussion of what Spenser meant by Temperance, Chastity, Holiness, Friendship, Love or Beauty, ... he calls into notice some unregarded features of several minor allegorical figures, and emphasizes skilfully the way in which Spenser's thought was almost everywhere shot through with diverse and not always compatible ideas.* Professor Legouis, in an appreciative Foreword writes: "The philosopher in Spenser is merely a disciple of the ancients, somewhat hesitating and perplexed between his pagan masters and the teaching of Christianity." Like many other recent writers, Dr. Bhattacharje shows Spenser as the disciple of Renaissance thinkers also, and he might with advantage have had even more to say about Renaissance interpretations of Aristotle and the Platonists.

—*Modern Language Review*, January, 1937

Dr. Bhattacharje's study of '*Platonic Ideas in Spenser*' is part of a dissertation presented to the University of Calcutta for the doctorate in

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English. As Professor Legouis remarks in his 'Foreword' to this book, this is no mere summary of European researches but a *personal and original examination of a special problem*.....

Dr. Bhattacharje's book is an attempt to supply a badly needed study, and although it leans... on the inadequate treatments of Harrison and Winstanley, it is a much more thorough investigation than we have yet had.

—*Modern Language Notes*, January, 1937

A general survey of 'Platonic Ideas in Spenser' has been undertaken by Mohinimohan Bhattacharje who traces their development from the early poems and the earlier books of *The Faerie Queene* to the later books. He shows how the ostensibly Aristotelian framework of Spenser's thought is throughout illuminated by gleams of Platonic profundity, derived at first from Plato himself and later from the Neo-Platonism of Plotinus as expounded by his Italian and French followers of the Renaissance.

The second book of *The Faerie Queene* is that in which Spenser is generally held to have kept closest to his professed model of the twelve moral virtues of Aristotle, and *special interest therefore attaches to Bhattacharje's quest for Platonism there*. His equation of Pyrochles, Cymochles and Guyon to the three Platonic elements of the Soul,—Passion, Appetite, and Reason may seem to be rather strained, and to neglect the special compound Mean which Aristotle devised for his virtue of Courage, but *there is force in Bhattacharje's argument that the internal sufferings of Pyrochles belong rather to Plato's conception of passions at discord within the Soul than to any Aristotelian extreme*. In Book I, also, his readiness to surrender the Redcrosse Knight to Calvin as a Christian conception lends weight to his claim for Una as an embodiment of Platonic Truth.

—*The Year's Work in English Studies*,

Vol. XVI (1935), p. 236

I remember reviewing your book and have it by me for reference. Indeed, *having used it in preparing lectures during the past session, I come to appreciate it more and more*, and specially the section on Neo-Platonism.....

I have always thought that the clue to the "Platonism" in Elizabethan poetry lies not so much in the text of Plato himself as in the commentaries, annotations and interpretations of his Renaissance editors

and disciples. A good deal of study has been given to this aspect of the subject, but more might be done. *Your work is suggestive.....*

You with your background and reading are just the man to write a large treatise tracing the several lines along which Platonism of various kinds affected English poetry from Tottel's Miscellany to Milton.

PROF. G. BULLOUGH
University of Sheffield

Only recently I have found time to read your book on the *Platonic Ideas in Spenser*. The book seems to me *a careful survey of the critical literature on the subject, showing discrimination, and here and there helping to make clear difficult points.*

PROF. MARIO PRAZ
University of Rome

I thank you for your courtesy in sending me a complimentary copy of your valuable *Platonic Ideas in Spenser* which I have read with much interest and profit. I shall avail myself, I assure you, of an early opportunity to review your book in the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*.

H. S. V. JONES,
Editor, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* (U.S.A.)

Dr. Bhattacharje has already made a name for himself as a student of Spenser by his *Studies in Spenser* published some time ago by the University of Calcutta. This new book gives ample evidence of careful scholarship and painstaking and exhaustive research into the large body of Spenserian criticism and also the literature of Platonism and the French and Italian mediæval poets.

Critics have been considerably puzzled by the blending of the ideas of Aristotle and of Plato in the *Faerie Queene*, partly because Spenser himself set out a scheme for his allegory in his dedicatory epistle to Raleigh which cannot be reconciled with the plan of the poem as it was actually written. This problem is treated in an illuminating way by Dr. Bhattacharje, who shews how the thought of Aristotle which influenced the poet in his younger days, gave place to that of Plato and also the Neo-Platonists. He also criticises convincingly the views of some of the leading scholars on Bk. I of the *Faerie Queene*, shewing how



Spenser blends the Christian idea of Holiness as a moral virtue with the Platonic conception of Reason.

—*Calcutta Review*, February, 1939

It curiously happens that as I was setting to write the few words of this "Foreword," I received a new publication of the John Hopkins Press: *The Axiochus of Plato translated by Ed. Spenser in 1592*. The *Axiochus* is no longer attributed to Plato, but it was so by all commentators in the sixteenth century, and the translation affords a fresh proof of Spenser's Platonism... Of course this quite recent discovery could not have been known to Mr. Bhattacharje when he composed his thesis. But it comes somehow in confirmation of his subject and of his views. The coincidence seems to add a piquancy to his distinguished work.

Essays like the one under consideration are no longer summaries or replicas of European researches but *personal and original examinations of special problems*. Eastern scholars now bring in trained minds to inquiries and controversies which had till recently been monopolised by the West. I for one expect much from their collaboration.

ÉMILE LEGOUIS

Honorary Professor of English Literature. The Sorbonne

He (Dr. Bhattacharje) has not only a *wide and close acquaintance with Spenser's sources, Italian, French and antique*, and with the relevant English literature, but also a *very marked critical gift for ordered analysis and statement*. His work is carefully documented and shows grasp of a very complex subject. Dr. Bhattacharje has, besides, an *unusual command of English which does not fail him even in the exposition of subtle points*.

I wholly agree with the high opinion expressed in the "Foreword" by Professor Legouis, himself one of the most eminent students of Spenser.

OLIVER ELTON